Christian Courier

A REFORMED WEEKLY

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Billy Graham wants to preach till year 2000 despite sudden illness

Alan Doerksen

TORONTO — Despite a sudden illness which forced him to get emergency treatment in a Toronto hospital, Billy Graham spoke to record crowds for the closing two days of his five-day Mission Ontario crusade and expressed his desire to continue preaching.

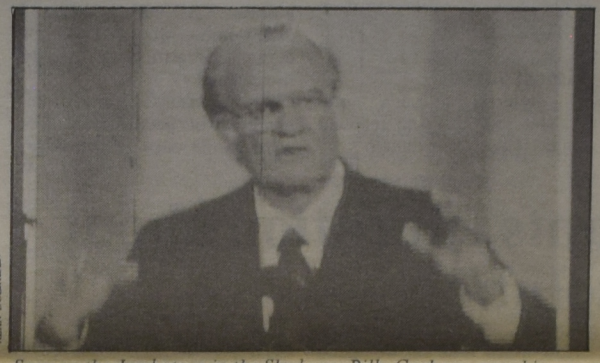
Graham, 76, fell ill on the first day of the crusade while speaking at a luncheon meeting at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre to supporters from the Canadian Club of Toronto and the Empire Club of Canada. For the first time in his 52-year career, he had to cut short a speech after nearly fainting.

"He never lost consciousness. He just became weak and said, 'I'm afraid I can't finish,'" said Libby Burnham, president of the Canadian Club, according to the *Globe and Mail*. "He was saying, 'I'm sorry, I'm sorry.' There was just a silence in the room. Everybody was just sort of standing there stunned."

Standing ovation

Graham was taken to Toronto East General Hospital, where he was treated for bleeding from the bowel. Although he was unable to attend sessions at the Skydome on June 7, 8 and 9, Graham delivered videotaped messages from his hospital bedside announcing that he would be at the Saturday rally even if he had to be taken by ambulance.

After being released from hospital on June 9, Graham preached to a record-setting crowd of 70,000 at the Skydome on June 10. Another 5,000 people listened to the program from outside speakers. Graham was greeted with a standing ovation, and chants of "Billy, Billy!" from the youthful audience.



ALAN DOERKSEN

Seen on the Jumbotron in the Skydome, Billy Graham urges his audience to commit their lives to God.

Speaking for about an hour, Graham called for racial tolerance, and urged the young audience to let Jesus into their hearts, even though others might laugh at them. He also told them Jesus could help them find a mate.

The Saturday program included Christian contemporary singer Michael W. Smith and Christian rappers DC Talk.

Elect Jesus

The June 11 Skydome rally was attended by 52,000 people, bringing the total crusade attendance to 226,000. Many people came by bus from churches across and beyond Ontario for the meetings.

The June 11 meeting was upbeat, and featured the melodic jazz and classical music of the Canadian Brass as well as an acoustic set from the Toronto band *the dustkickers*. Later, George Beverly Shea, a longtime member of Graham's team, sang "I'd rather have Jesus."

See **GRAHAM** *page 2...*

Low-crime B.C. community serious about violence

Violence-Free Day

Jane Ouwehand

AGASSIZ, B.C. — His colleagues had told him no one would come out on a warm spring Friday night, and he would be home early, said Mark Lalonde. He made the comment as moderator of a community forum which celebrated Violence-Free Day on May 26.

In fact, over 90 teachers, members of town council, school board members, people in the helping professions and interested citizens came to hear about preventing violence.

Speaker Nancy Wrenshall from the Kent Correctional Institution in Agassiz, spoke about how each offender goes through a 10-12 week assessment in which information is gathered.

An inmate is then offered programs which could be beneficial. Some programs deal with substance abuse, parenting, anger management, how to use leisure time, family relationships and how to stop committing sexual offenses. Grade 12 equivalency is also offered. Joining is voluntary, but there is a strong incentive to participate if the inmate wants to qualify for privileges like parole or day programs.

JANE OUWEHAND

Mark Lalonde

Wrenshall pointed out some of the assumptions that Corrections Canada works with: one is that education can make a difference, and another is that violence can be reduced if we all work together.

Family relations and social skills

Speaker Judith Lawrence, also with Corrections Canada, outlined some of the programs offered to offenders who are on parole or day programs. She mentioned that across Canada 12,000 offenders are on parole. Two live in Agassiz.

The Living Without Violence program, which teaches new ways to live, recognizes that many offenders were themselves abused. A support program for spouses is offered, as well as programs that teach about family relationships and social skills.

Often offenders on parole have been conditionally released: They must not use alcohol and must stay away from known criminals. Mechanisms for open communication between social services, mental health services, and parole officers can be very helpful in reducing or even preventing violence.

Power 'needs'

Dr. Lachlan Macintosh was the first to respond to these speakers. He noted that violence is a leading cause of death and injury. He attributes violence to certain people's "need" to dominate. When posturing and bluster fails, they resort to violence. In a small community, a doctor soon notices that Joe's broken hand matches John's broken nose.

See **MACINTOSH** *page 2...*

In this Issue

Below the surface of the Bible.....p. 10

A day in a storefront mission.....p. 11

Misconceptions about Mary Magdalene....p. 12

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News

Graham compares modern society to Sodom

...continued from page 1

Touching briefly on Ontario, Graham commented, "Now that the election is over, we can start electing Jesus Christ as Savior."

Remember Lot's wife

Graham spoke on the theme "Remember Lot's wife" (Luke 17:32). In his message, he compared modern society with the city of Sodom.

He spoke of the end times, saying, "thinkers, scholars ask me: do I think we're entering a period called the end of the world?" Graham affirmed this by pointing to signs mentioned by Jesus, such as his prediction that after the Gospel was preached to all the world, the end would come. Demonstrating how widely the Gospel has already been preached, Graham referred to his own recent crusade in Puerto Rico, which was broadcast to an audience of billions around the world.

Graham compared the corruption of modern society to Sodom, saying, "the road to Armageddon is the same as the road to the destruction of Sodom." The people of Sodom "were guilty of sinful pleasures just like we are." Similarly, modern people are demanding more sex and "want it delivered to us in every form possible," said Graham.

Almost saved

Referring to Lot's wife, Graham said that she rebelled against God, even though "she was almost saved... a few more steps and she would have been there." Addressing seekers in the audience, Graham said, "You're very close to the kingdom today, but you haven't taken that final step."

Graham spoke of God's judgment, saying, "God never judges anyone without warning." But he added, "God is overwhelmingly a God of love."

As he urged members of the audience to make a public commitment to God, Graham referred to his recent time in hospital. "All of a sudden, I didn't know where I was... I began to realize how quickly life can end."

At Graham's invitation, hundreds of people went forward to the edge of the stage, where counsellors met with them for discussion and to give out special booklets.

Taking the emphasis off himself, Graham said, "You haven't come to Billy Graham. I can't save anyone. All I am is a messenger... You're coming to Christ." Graham urged those who came forward to read the Bible, pray, witness, and "get into a church where Christ is proclaimed."

Preach to the end

After the crusade ended, Graham reported back to the hospital for further treatment. Besides his recent illness, Graham has been suffering from Parkinson's disease for several years. But despite his poor health, Graham has expressed a desire to keep on preaching. In his June 11 message, he said that at the turn of this century he hopes to be preaching — possibly in Canada. The audience applauded this suggestion warmly.

Mission Ontario featured sessions focused on various age and cultural groups. Besides the Saturday evening youth meeting, a Saturday morning "Kids' Gig" featured a 2000-voice choir, and musical guests during the week ranged from well-known Gospel singer Andrae Crouch to Canadian Inuit singer and recent Juno-winner Susan Aglukark. Members of many ethnic groups attended the rallies, and simultaneous translation was available in 19 languages.

Speaker wants education about conflict resolution

...continued from page 1

Dr. Macintosh would like to see education about conflict resolution and how to negotiate power. He would like to see offenders held accountable for their actions.

"How much time do we spend telling children what they do wrong? How much time do we spend telling children what they do right? I have never heard someone say, 'Thank you for telling me how stupid and useless I am. That was really helpful.'" She mentioned the Second Step program as a tool in the community for teaching good relationships before problems develop. It begins with teaching empathy and ways of building relationships.

JANE OUWEHAND

Constable Rayworth (left), Dr. Macintosh and Linda Brotherston spoke out against violence in the community.

Local police constable Steve Rayworth reinforced the message of the speakers. He finds it very important that other professionals and the general public know what goes on in jails. Rayworth encouraged those who are victims of crime and abuse to come forward and get the help and support available to them. He also explained that in case of family violence, it is the police officer who lays charges, not the victim.

Linda Brotherston, family therapist, asked the audience, "How much time do we spend telling children what they do wrong? How much time do we spend telling children what they do right? I have never heard someone say, 'Thank you for telling me how stupid and useless I am. That was really helpful.'" She mentioned the Second Step program as a tool in the community for teaching good relationships before problems develop. It begins with teaching empathy and ways of building relationships.

What can we do?

Some of the concerns expressed in the question and answer period were: How can teachers be of even more help to troubled youth? Do more adolescents get into trouble because mothers work outside the home? How can friends and neighbors help care for each other's children? What could we as a town do, to provide a place for teenagers to release some energy in their spare time?

Over coffee afterward, someone quoted statistics suggesting that 88-90 per cent of prison inmates are learning-disabled, and she wondered if "helping them learn to read and write and acquire self-esteem" were also issues that should have been addressed.

Pastor Steve Laug, chairperson of the Child and Youth Council, said the forum was organized because of "a growing need to make people aware of what is already happening, the violence that's here." The council hopes to take pro-active steps towards "preserving the relative safety we already have."

Laug was pleased with the turnout. When asked about the next step, he talked of the increased awareness of the problem in our community and the ongoing "networking" within the council by professionals who deal with children.

Moderator Mark Lalonde remarked about the high level of commitment in this community and noted the low level of crime. "When is the last time you had a drive-by shooting here?" he asked.

Christian Farmers optimistic about Ontario election results

GUELPH, Ont. (CFFO) — The Ontario electoral victory of Mike Harris's "Common Sense Revolution" could create a good long-term business environment for the province's farmers, says Elbert van Donkersgoed, research and policy director for the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario (CFFO).

Of particular appeal is the premier-elect's commitment to deficit reduction and tax cuts.

"There may not be as much money for agricultural programs in the short term, but if tax cuts and deficit reduction leave more money in the pockets of family farm operators, that's very appealing," says van Donkersgoed. "That combination creates a good environment for farmers to operate within."

Another appealing aspect of the massive Conservative win is that there could be a greater appreciation of farm and rural issues, says van Donkersgoed. He says Harris appears to understand Ontario's rural population particularly. In addition, a good number of MPPs with rural or suburban backgrounds will likely be sitting in the Conservative cabinet.

Keep good farmland

With the election of the Harris Conservatives, several new challenges arise for both the government, farmers and the rural community.

One major challenge is in land use planning. The former NDP government passed Bill 163, a major piece of legislation that included significant protection for the province's best farmland. The new government plans to scrap the legislation and develop something new.

"The challenge for the Harris government will be to try and retain some of the good directions that came out of Bill 163," says van Donkersgoed. "We don't want to return to a situation in which our best farmland can now be easily paved over."

Van Donkersgoed admits it's possible for the Conservatives to make improvements to the directions set out in Bill 163. In particular, land-use planning needs to take a much more realistic view of agriculture than is currently seen, he says.

"Many urban planners seem to have an image of agriculture that pushes a nice, pastoral setting," says van Donkersgoed. "This is showing up in zoning bylaws. But the reality is that today's farming is an intensively productive activity, with

See **HARRIS** *page 3...*

News

Several CC readers welcome Harris's 'workfare' plan

Alan Doerksen

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — As Mike Harris's new Progressive Conservative government takes over in Ontario, some Christians are concerned about the effect of Harris's plans to change welfare into 'workfare.'

'Workfare' and large cuts to taxes and government spending were the main planks in Harris's successful bid for the premier's office. Workfare would require able-bodied recipients to do jobs like planting trees or monitoring school hallways in exchange for their government cheques. Under Harris's workfare plan, $450 million would be shifted from welfare to workfare spending over the next three years. Harris also has plans to reduce Ontario's welfare benefits to 10 per cent above the national average from the current level of 30 per cent above. At present, Ontario pays about $6.8 billion annually in welfare to 1.3 million people, making it the highest-paying system in Canada.

To cut back government spending, Harris has promised to cut 'non-essential' government spending by 20 per cent and eliminate 13,000 civil service jobs. Another main election promise of Harris was to cut provincial income tax by 30 per cent over three years.

C.C. FILES

Mike Harris

Must cut government expenses

Harris will be a good premier "if he's true to his word," says Hans Vander Stoep, executive director of Canadian Christian Business Federation. But Harris is "somewhat of an unknown quantity," he adds.

Vander Stoep supports the idea of workfare. "I think workfare is good because it teaches people to get up and go to work.... It keeps them in a routine." In the short term, workfare will probably not save money, but the long term effects will make it worthwhile.

Cam Jackson, one of the architects of the workfare plan, is the PC MPP for Vander Stoep's riding of Burlington South. Jackson is a Christian and has spoken regularly to CCBF's annual meetings. "He's a friend of our organization," says Vander Stoep.

Harris will keep his campaign promise of cutting taxes by 30 per cent, but only if he cuts government expenditure, he says.

Examining the Liberals' performance in the election, Vander Stoep comments, "in retrospect, they were leading in the polls, but they didn't have an original thought." Harris, on the other hand, was consistent in his message. Vander Stoep doubts that Liberal leader Lyn McLeod will stay on as party leader. NDP leader Bob Rae "has been a remarkable premier," says Vander Stoep. "I think he'll go on to bigger and better things" — possibly federal politics.

Generally, the PC win will be good for business in Ontario, says Vander Stoep.

Gender not an issue

Nancy Exel Lammers, assistant for church relations for Christian Reformed World Missions of Canada, was "pleasantly surprised with the results" of the election. Lammers thinks Harris will make a good premier. "What I found most appealing about Harris is that he seems to be down-to-earth," she says.

Lammers likes the idea of workfare, and thinks it will cut back on the cost of Ontario's welfare system. But she questions what types of work the new government will find for welfare recipients to do.

Lammers is more skeptical about Harris's promise to make a large tax cut. "It would be wonderful if he could.... I'd be surprised if he could do it."

One problem the Liberals had in the campaign was that McLeod wasn't as firm in her positions as Harris was, says Lammers. The PCs "were very direct in terms of what they were doing."

C.C. FILES

Hans Vander Stoep

She doesn't think gender was a major issue in Ontario voters not electing McLeod as premier. Ontario is becoming more open to having female leaders, she says.

Welcomes financial order

The Liberals' poor performance was not gender-related, suggests Ray Pennings, publicity and promotions director of Christian Labour Association of Canada. "I expected a Liberal collapse," says Pennings. "The Liberal support was a mile wide and an inch deep."

Examining Harris as a leader, Pennings says, "on a personal level, he has a lot of skills.... Certainly, he has some ideas of his own that he's been fairly consistent on."

Pennings is satisfied with the PC win. "I welcome the focus on putting the province's finances in order. I have some concerns about how these are to be accomplished."

One concern he has is that workfare could create "a divide between low-paying jobs and professional jobs that have a knowledge component." Another concern is the bureaucracy that could be needed to run the workfare system.

Pennings believes Harris's plan to cut taxes by 30 per cent is realistic, and would bring government spending down to its spending levels of five years ago.

Asked about how the PC win will affect Ontario's business climate, Pennings says "it's perception as well as reality that matters." The perception is that "the Conservatives are much more friendly to business," he says.

Good for young people

Herman Koops, who runs a travel agency in London, Ont., is glad about the PC win, and supports the idea of workfare. "I don't know if it'll save money. Definitely, it will be good for the young people on welfare," he says.

Koops also supports Harris's plans to cut taxes. "He sounds like he's willing to make the drastic changes required to do that." Koops, who says he has always been a conservative, thinks the new government will create a good climate for business. "A cut in taxes attracts business."

Koops was not surprised at the Liberal loss, and describes McLeod as being too defensive.

Harris...

...continued from page 2

municipal planning needing to address that reality."

Another challenge that will be coming forward is the issue of farm labor. The Harris government has vowed to scrap NDP legislation which gave more power to unions and extended unions to farmworkers. In particular, Harris vows to give agriculture back its exemption to labor legislation.

But van Donkersgoed believes "at this time, we don't need to revisit farm labor legislation. The farm community has invested lots of time and money into the subject, and we came up with a good compromise between the rights of farmers and workers."

He adds, "The potential to return to the days of court challenges will return if the agricultural exemption is reinstated. I'd rather resolve this issue by negotiation — as the farm community did with the NDP — then leave it to the courts."

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Editorial

Ontario voters reject socialist dreams

I was sitting in the waiting room of a local muffler place when I overheard two people talking about the next day's Ontario election. They didn't think the "workfare" scheme proposed by Mike Harris would be successful. But they were going to vote for him anyway because they liked the idea that the days of a free lunch would be over.

"This country is leaning toward the weak-minded," one said. The other agreed: "The ones without a backbone are getting everything."

Their conversation pretty much captures the mood many Ontario voters were in on June 8. It helps to explain why so many Ontarians voted for the Harris version of conservatism, which is not the same kind of conservatism that put John Robarts and Bill Davis in power a few decades ago. Robarts and Davis were middle-of-the-road conservatives. Their "reasonable" policies were possible because of prosperous times. Harris is a right-wing, hard-nosed conservative of the '90s who has to make tough decisions, the kind approved of by the likes of Preston Manning and Ralph Klein. After the election results were announced, someone called Ontario the Alberta of the East.

What happened in Ontario is in essence a widespread phenomenon that has spread right across the North American continent. It's a backlash movement that wants to get rid of big government, special interest groups, high taxes and growing deficits. Today's conservative suspects that government kindness, paid for by hardworking, decent citizens, is directed toward irresponsible and parasitical people. The quality of mercy, especially towards refugees, criminals and the poor is definitely strained these days.

Never enough

To call these conservatives mean-spirited, as did the Liberals and the NDP in the Ontario election, is simplistic. It's hard to blame the electorate for being fed up with successive Liberal and NDP governments whose "kindness" drove the province another day older and deeper in debt. We read in the vote a general dislike for the way our society is moving.

If one sees society as a soup, then there are many useless ingredients in that soup. One of those ingredients is the increasing insistence on privileges without an accompanying demand for responsible living.

Last Christmas a story appeared in our local paper about two unmarried sisters, each with a couple of children, complaining about the fact that the Salvation Army was not giving them any money this year for Christmas because their welfare payments were too large to make them qualify. The sisters were outraged and posed for a picture. How could they buy toys for their children this time? The response was not exactly what they had hoped. Readers poured scorn and sarcasm over the sisters.

Socialist kindness and tolerance

Another useless ingredient of the societal soup is the notion that social problems must be attacked from the top down by legislating everyone into straitjackets. This reliance on legal enforcement of social righteousness made the New Democratic Party in Ontario odious to many who don't share the socialist vision. Equity legislation, redefinition of family and spouse to accomodate gay rights, funding of abortion clinics, anti-scab legislation, all these were considered legislative priorities by the NDP. Those who promoted these policies were pictured as compassionate and anyone who was opposed was mean-spirited.

Not particularly helping the flavor of the social soup is the exchange of morality for license. In many professional circles (news media, teaching profession, artistic community), the highest point of civil behavior is not upholding moral standards but tolerance for behavior that violates those standards. To disapprove of certain lifestyles is to be considered narrow-minded and bigoted.

In the face of fiscal irresponsibility and a decline of spiritual values, voters will look for another way. And although we dislike the left/right framework of a humanist vision, we prefer the restraint of a conservative government to the permissiveness of a liberal one, whether that be red or orange in color. We hope that something good will come from this political shift to the right. **BW**

No room for Christian parties

One person commented after the Ontario elections that he was glad that the socialists were out and the conservatives in. "Of course," he added, "It would even be better if everybody became a Christian. That would solve the problems of our society."

Someone else remarked, "I don't think so. Those Christians would first have to be perfect before all the problems could be solved."

Exactly. And that's one reason why we do not think it a good idea to have a Christian political party at the federal and provincial level. Although in principle we support communal Christian action in politics, in practice we forsee too many problems.

First of all, experience has taught us that Christians do not agree on political principles and policies. Secondly, seeking political power with integrity and honesty is an oxymoron in a television/news media era of politics where image is all important.

Thirdly, it's much less damaging to the church of Christ to have imperfect individual Christians working in politics than to set up an imperfect Christian party that will be seen as the voice of Christianity. Fourthly, the electoral system in Canada prevents us from making significant inroads, and so, strategically speaking, we might be putting our resources in the wrong place.

We would be much happier with Christian voices or think tanks which call the other parties to political obedience. **BW**

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Letters

Where is Luitjens' public confession?

According to news reports, Hans Isaak, pastor of First United Mennonite Church, feels Canada is violating a basic human rights issue because the government doesn't want to give Luitjens his Canadian papers back. Isaak is very concerned about this matter since Mr. Luitjens "was well liked as a deacon."

All of this may be true, but I should like to hear a little more about his becoming a Christian. Was there a sincere and public confession about his terrible past? Mr. Luitjens was a member (and a notorious member, at that) of the "Gestapo-styled" group of Dutch Nazis. Their office was close to my first charge in Appelscha. I think the name of the place was Norg. The Dutch Nazis were hotly in pursuit of everyone in the resistance movement — people who tried to save as many Jews as they could.

When people from the underground were taken prisoner they were brought to Luitjens' office. The "boss" was a concrete worker from Rotterdam. They had a large, mean dog which they set upon prisoners. And as an extra feature they had a bathtub in which they placed people who were interrogated. If the latter didn't want to give names of other underground people, they were pushed under water till they almost drowned. They were then revived and the interrogation went on. Refusal to co-operate meant being ducked again. One can be sure that from Luitjens' office many people were transferred to concentration camps and to a terrible death.

As long as I don't hear or see a confession of Luitjens' terrible behavior during those years, I say: I don't care about you being a deacon. It's just a show! To be sure, Luitjens' boss, the concrete worker, faced the consequences. He didn't flee to South America or Canada. He was condemned to death and sho.tly thereafter executed.

Jac. Geuzebroek
Whitby, Ont.

New categories of rights are destructive

The news story on the gay rights issue (CC, June 9), in my view, did not help to clarify the real issue in this story. In fact, the article concluded with someone's opinion in favor of granting full legal rights to same-sex "relationships." The views attributed to myself left out the thrust of my comments to Mr. Doerksen, the reporter. Please allow me to clarify my position.

The Charter of Rights and Freedoms is now used as a tool to expand the power of the state by creating new categories of rights that are fundamentally altering every institution of our society — all in a manner that is destructive.

The demands made (and acceded to) by the gay rights activists is in fundamental conflict with the biblical norms for the relationship between the sexes, for marriage and the family. Instead of focusing on that, the June 9 article dealt with a detail that merely served to becloud what is really happening.

The "gay rights" movement is after much more than legal protection against assault and unfair discrimination suffered by some homosexuals. It is a defiant attempt to completely alter the definition of family and marriage and to receive public approval and legal sanction for what is in fact an immoral and even dangerous practice.

The new direction in public policies regarding homosexuality, as well as many other issues, is nurtured by a radical secularization of life, spearheaded by the media, the academy and public policy makers.

I challenge all who want to give Christian leadership to speak unequivocally about the topic discussed in the June 9 article. I can foresee the day that it may well be a criminal offence to speak critically in public about homosexuality. All the more reason to drop the blandness and equivocation that now so often surrounds this controversial topic.

Harry Antonides
Willowdale, Ont.

50th Anniversary Rearview Mirror

Sex education is important, says Dr. Roukema

The April 29, 1960 Calvinist Contact *reported on a PTA meeting in Hamilton in which the subject was sex education, a subject "very difficult for most parents to discuss... with their children."*

Parents and Teachers Meeting

On Thursday, March 31, the P.T.A. of the Hamilton Christian School met in the basement of the Mount Hamilton Chr. Ref. Church.

Dr. J. Roukema was the speaker for this evening. He addressed the meeting on the topic, "Sex Education in the Home and School."

The fact that the attendance at the meeting was excellent proved that most parents were concerned about sex education for their children. It may be said that this meeting proved to be very profitable for them.

In his speech Dr. Roukema pointed out that the reason why our children should receive sex education is to help them develop into well adjusted Christian men and women. It will teach them a deep respect for God and His plan of development.

The speaker realized that it was very difficult for most parents to discuss sex matters with their children since many were raised in homes were they received little or no proper sex education.

Many parents have the idea that they should wait telling their children about sex until they are a little older. It often happens that parents wait until their son or daughter has approached adolescence and then call him in for a lecture on the "facts of life". Parents who do this do not realize that sex education is a process. It begins when a child is tiny and continues until he grows to adulthood. Preferably, a parent should talk with his child whenever he wants to know. They should listen carefully when their child asks questions. When he does ask them he is ready to learn. They should tell him the things he wants to know, but they should not go beyond his level of interest or understanding.

It has been proven that children who have a wholesome understanding of human development find it much easier to control themselves. It is much better to know the truth than not knowing the facts and wondering what they are.

Parents should win a child's confidence in this matter so that the child will come to them, the parents. If he cannot go to his parents he will get his information somewhere else, and probably not in a way of which parents would approve.

It is the parents' privilege that they may tell their children about the wonderful way in which God has created their bodies. It is a responsibility also and parents should not leave it to the church or the school. However, when it comes to teaching about the basic facts of the anatomy and physiology of reproduction the schooi could probably do the best job. Also, whenever teachers have an opportunity to discuss it in class, maybe in connection with a Bible story, they should take the opportunity. The ideal would be that teachers might go out from the assumption that all parents had given their children sex information in the home.

Dr. Roukema presented to the parents many helpful suggestions and advice; he realized that there was much more to be said on this matter, therefore he recommended the book, "How to Tell Your Children About Sex" by Clyde M. Narramore. This book is written by a christian educator and will prove to be very helpful to parents in the sex education of their children.

Before the parents came to this meeting they already realized that sex education was important, but many did not know, or were in doubt how to go about it. It is not an easy matter, but that evening they became better informed and went home full of new zeal and with God's help they will be able to do a better job.

F. V.

He walked out on the sermon

Fr. Ron Holheiser

A priest friend tells the story of how he was preaching one Sunday on the parable of the wedding banquet. He was emphasizing the theme of urgency within the parable: "We must respond now!" he kept reiterating. "Tomorrow it will be too late!"

At that point a man got up and walked out of church. The priest suspected that his homily had upset the man.

The next day this man phoned him, saying: "The reason I walked out of church yesterday wasn't that I didn't like your homily. I left because I understood exactly what you were saying.

"My brother and I had a fight 12 years ago and hadn't spoken to each other since that time. When you pointed out how Jesus warns about delaying coming to the banquet, I knew that if I didn't act today, tomorrow I wouldn't have the heart for it.

"I left church and phoned my brother from the first pay phone I found. We got together last night and forgave each other!"

Reprinted from the Catholic Register

Education

A ray of hope

EDUCATION

Alyce Oosterhuis

As I write this column, the Christian Reformed Church Synod of 1995 is in session and everyone is waiting and praying in the foreground/background for a resolution of conflicts that have resounded throughout CRC congregations for several decades. Whatever the outcome may be, I hope that, at the least, there will be a glimmer of hope and promise for those women who wait in the church wings for a confirmation of their right to be church leaders.

The need for a ray of hope was brought home forcefully to me last week as we sat around a board room table to hear praises and criticisms of our Christian school system. It is unfortunate that one can summarize the good things in a few well-chosen words, while the criticisms need to be described in run-on sentences. And as the sentences grew to paragraphs, I found myself becoming increasingly depressed. At that point I decided that one cannot end a year, a season, retreat, or even a synod on a negative note. The conclusion of any gathering must be upbeat so that the participants leave with a renewed zeal or commitment.

The end colors the next beginning

The same holds true for conclusions to a school year. It is therefore unfortunate that in most high school and college classes the concluding exercise for the year is an examination. Those who graduate have their upbeat moments in the festivities of banquets, diplomas, valedictorians, class historians. Such activities enable even the most disheartened graduates to reflect upon their years and reaffirm some good memories with others. However, for those who are simply progressing from one school year to the next there are few occasions for a class to gather with its teachers and recall the previous year's events. Consequently, those who conclude the year on a negative note look forward with dread to the following year. I wonder if anything can be orchestrated to change these negative moods?

Could the school year be changed so that the last award-recognition assembly is held after the final examination? Could profs organize after-exam class get-togethers in which students could offer suggestions for the next year and then reminisce about all the good things that occurred? Could we organize "bricks and bouquets" events after the examinations and assure ourselves that the bouquets conclude the evening?

Mustard seeds

I have been to many funerals in the course of the last years and if there is anything that we stress in Christian funerals, it is the promise of the resurrection. In my Oxford dictionary, a synonym for resurrection is revival; a living again; a sense of renewal. Good alternative phrases for *hope*. As the work at synod and our academic classes concludes in the next days, let us strive to assure that hope is uppermost for all whose lives are affected by our actions and decisions.

In the ancient story of Pandora's box, when all the evils had been released upon the world, only hope remained to ease life for the human race.

Without hope we cannot cultivate our mustard seeds of faith in action. Hope is the seed of growth and renewal.

Alyce Horzelenberg Oosterhuis teaches educational psychology in The King's University College B.Ed. program, Edmonton.

Teachers' union tries to sabotage The King's' practice teaching program

Nelly Westerhoff

EDMONTON — The Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) passed a resolution on May 21 asking its members not to supervise student practice teachers who are enrolled in teacher education degree programs not offered by Alberta's universities. The resolution was announced in a CBC newscast in Ontario.

The news bulletin implied that, in addition to the universities, Alberta's community colleges had been accredited to offer education degrees. But since The King's University College is the only institution which has recently been accredited, it is clearly targeted in this resolution.

Dr. Henk Van Andel, president of the college, spoke with dismay of the ATA's action: "The teachers' association gave as their reason for the resolution completely invalid arguments, claiming, for instance, that the status of teachers as professionals would be undermined if they were not taught in the same environment as doctors, engineers and lawyers. Yet the University of Lethbridge, which has a teacher certification program, is a liberal arts university. Furthermore, the union has repeated and publicly implied that The King's' program is inferior."

Efforts rebuffed

Van Andel continued, "Efforts to settle concerns and clear up misunderstandings are rebuffed. They refuse any kind of cooperation."

To prevent public misconceptions due to the teachers' union's hostile attitude, officials at the college released a press report in which they politely but firmly refuted the arguments and allegations mounted by union officials.

Rigorous process

The King's pointed out that in order to obtain their (supposedly questionable) accreditation the college was subjected to an in-depth and rigorous review process by both an independent panel and a board which included senior representatives from all four Alberta universities. The review was positive and, academically, the education program was found to be equivalent in all respects to programs offered by provincial universities. The accreditation board approved it unanimously.

Despite the union efforts to discredit and boycott The King's College program, Alberta schools are required by law to provide placement for student teachers. "Therefore," says Van Andel, "the students may be assured that the program will be offered and they will have practice placements this fall."

Van Andel reappointed as The King's president

CC Staff

EDMONTON — The King's University College board of governors has announced the reappointment of Dr. Henk Van Andel to a third five-year term as president of the college.

In making the reappointment, effective July 1, the governors cited Van Andel's accomplishments in the job since 1985: leadership in achieving Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Education degree programs; and steering the college through the acquisition of its new $13 million campus.

The college's current enrollment is just over 500 students.

For our calendar of events, please turn to page 19.

Dr. Henk Van Andel

Book Review

Media/Arts

Novel tells of war-time resistance by Dutch fisherman

The Trap

by Rink van der Velde. Translated from the Frisian by Henry J. Baron. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Redux Publications, 1995. Softcover, 136 pp. Reviewed by Harry Van Dyke, history department, Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont.

Dr. Bruins Slot, the editor of the underground newspaper *Trouw*, called the resistance to Nazi rule a "war of religion." But what was it for those who did not share his outlook?

Dutch war-time resistance was fought for Queen and country, or church and nation, or justice and liberty. In some cases it was fought for sheer defiance of the establishment. The valor and vanity of the latter motivation is driven home with striking simplicity in *The Trap*.

The official *History of The Netherlands in the Second World War* by L. de Jong has documented that two groups contributed far above their share to underground activities: Communists and Calvinists (*Gereformeerden*). Involvement by Dutch Reformed people (*Hervormden*) was disproportionately low, as was that of Roman Catholic laypersons (though some of their leaders were actually quite prominent in bucking the New Order).

Shifts targets

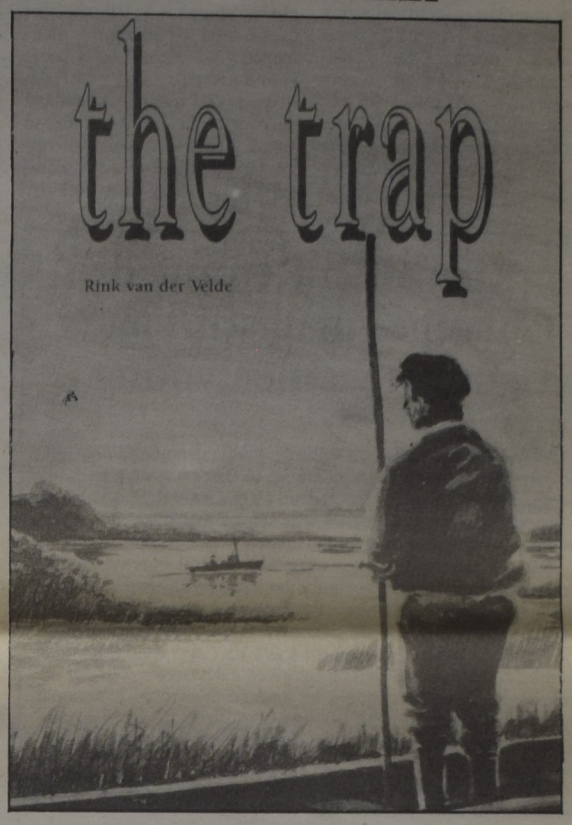
If you are like me and have heard and read mostly about resistance by orthodox Protestants, you should right the balance somewhat and read this short novel by journalist/storyteller Rink van der Velde. It is about an eel fisher whose cottage on a reed-ringed Frisian lake becomes a refuge for "divers," fugitives and downed Allied pilots.

The man hails from a line of exploited peat workers, who in addition to being inveterate poachers were active in protest marches, strikes, riots and similar "anarchist" activities. He has never gotten along with "the authorities" and he isn't about to click his heels when the Nazis take control. He was brought up to revere Domela Nieuwenhuis, the turn-of-the-century radical socialist, so in 1940 his sabotage of law and order simply shifts target.

One early dawn the place is raided, but the search turns up nothing. He is taken away under arrest. In Ljouwert, the interrogating officer makes it clear that he'd better spill some names or else it won't look good for his son. Yes, boasts the officer, we nabbed him too last night, in rather compromising circumstances. But no harm will come to him if you co-operate.

But have they nabbed him? Or is it just a bluff? In chapter after chapter, as the tension mounts, we learn more and more about the inner workings of the man's mind. In a surprise existentialist twist the man comes to the decision that there is only one way in which he can have his freedom — supreme freedom. Told with the strict economy, the story is based on a true incident during WWII. It will linger in your mind long after you have finished its 11 short chapters.

Van der Velde, author of numerous novels and short stories, was awarded the Gysbert Japiks literary prize in 1975. *De Fuke* first appeared in 1966 but was revised last year. The translation is a success: *The Trap* reads like the original *De Fuke*.



Religion gains in prime time, but falls on network news

ALEXANDRIA, Va. (EP) — Entertainment television's treatment of religion improved significantly during the last year, but network news continued to ignore religion, according to the Media Research Center's second annual study of how the networks deal with religious issues.

The study found that the number of portrayals of religion in prime time more than doubled, from 116 in 1993 to 253 in 1994. That sharp increase took place even though the amount of hours of original prime time programming monitored increased only slightly, from 1,674.5 to 1,716.

Prime time programming on CBS was the most favorable to religion, with 55 per cent of all portrayals of religion being positive. Fox was next (46 per cent), with NBC (38 per cent) and ABC (36 per cent) trailing. Last year, the highest proportion of positive portrayals was only 37 per cent, on ABC.

But overall, positive depictions outnumbered negatives by almost two-to-one (44 to 23 per cent), while in 1993 negatives outnumbered positives by the same ratio (56 to 28 per cent).

Shows singled out for their positive treatment of religion were CBS's "Touched By an Angel" and "Christy," ABC's "Thunder Alley," and NBC's "L.A. Law" and "Homicide: Life on the Street." Probably the most offensive to believers was NBC's "John Larroquette Show," though even that series did not regularly engage in religion bashing.

Little coverage

But while entertainment television was increasing its portrayal of religion, total network news coverage of religion dropped in 1994. Network evening news stories increased five per cent, but morning show stories dropped almost 25 per cent, and coverage on magazine shows and Sunday morning interview programs fell 50 per cent.

Total network television news coverage of religion remains numerically insignificant: out of more than 18,000 evening news stories, religion drew only 225; out of more than 26,000 morning segments, religion drew only 151. And despite an increase in overall time devoted to network magazine and interview shows, the number of religion stories on such programs fell from 18 to nine.

The Catholic Church again dominated television news coverage, drawing disdain in 24 stories for "distracting" the U.N. population conference in Cairo with its anti-abortion stance. According to the Media Research Center, the networks portrayed Catholic and Islamic theological opposition to abortion as a disturbing and rigid inconvenience.

No time for Protestantism

Protestant Christianity remained nearly invisible to network news. In fact, the networks devoted less time to Protestant denominations than to New Age "spirituality" movements. The religious right was again portrayed by the networks as a hateful, frightening force of "intolerance and extremism," as NBC's Bryant Gumbel put it.

On social issues, the total number of network news stories about violence and harassment at abortion clinics increased from 150 stories in 1993 to 245 stories in 1994, while violence against the pro-life movement attracted only one story. Without the issue of gays in the military before Congress, media coverage of homosexuals declined dramatically, from 756 total stories in 1993 to 105 in 1994.

To improve news coverage of religion, the Media Research Center suggested that networks hire religion reporters, following the example of ABC, which employs Peggy Wehmeyer on the religion beat. It also suggests extending the idea of newsroom diversity to include people of faith, presenting the social positions of religious figures without contempt, and ending the "good news is no news" mentality that keeps the positive contributions of religious organizations from being aired.

Church

Synod upholds voting rights of Classis GR East

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (CRC Synod 1995) — For the first time in denominational history, one classis (regional group of churches) requested that another classis be "disenfranchised" (denied voting privileges) at Synod 1995 because the first classis did not force churches in its jurisdiction to comply with Synod 1994's decision regarding women in ecclesiastical office. Synod denied the request.

Classis Illiana, which includes churches in Illinois, Indiana and Tennessee, challenged the rights of Classis Grand Rapids East to participate in making synodical decisions. In its overture to synod, Classis Illiana said Classis Grand Rapids East "undercut the authority of synod" by permitting its individual churches the freedom to decide whether or not women may be ordained as elders. By allowing such disobedience, it said the unity of the denomination and its communal life as a church of Jesus Christ is threatened.

Synod denied Classis Illiana's overture on the grounds that (1) it would be inappropriate to take action against only one classis when other classes have made similar decisions; (2) Synod 1994 did not instruct or mandate the enforcement of their decision but only "urged" councils to stop ordaining women as elders and to release those already elected; and (3) such action would be "hasty and extreme."

One speaker suggested that it would be unfair to take action against the classis as a whole when only six of the 15 churches have failed to comply, however, synod did not approve this statement as further grounds for its decision since a classis acts as a body.

Part of the dilemma synod faced was the lack of guidelines and procedures for dealing with churches that fail to comply. Consequently, synod asked an advisory committee to discuss a possible study committee that would study this matter further.

Synod this year elected the following delegates to its four-member executive: Cal Bolt, pastor of Twelfth Avenue CRC in Grand Rapids, Mich. (president); Jack Vos, pastor of First CRC in Barrie, Ont. (vice-president); Howard Vanderwell, pastor of Hillcrest CRC in Hudsonville, Mich. (first clerk); and Robert Godfrey, president of Westminster Theological Seminary in Escondido, Calif. (second clerk).

Canadian Reformed Churches maintain status quo re: women voting

Marian Van Til

ABBOTSFORD, B.C. — While many denominations have women clergy, and others continue to discuss that possibility, however contentiously, the recent 1995 General Synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches was spared that issue: it was discussing women's suffrage in the church.

The synod's 16 delegates examined several overtures which requested a committee "to study the issue of whether the sisters ought to participate in voting for office bearers," reports the June 2 issue of *Clarion*, the denomination's official publication.

"Several members of synod argued that previous synods had addressed this issue and have given a decisive 'No' to the proposal that women should be granted the vote. These members argued that no new grounds [had] been given to warrant even proposing a committee to examine the issue once again," says *Clarion*.

Others argued that there were new grounds, citing last year's Synod Ommen in the Netherlands, the synod of a sister church to the Canadian Reformed Churches. Synod Ommen rescinded a previous synod's decision prohibiting women from voting and gave scriptural grounds for granting women the vote in church.

After lengthy discussion a recommendation was made to appoint the requested study committee, which would have included evaluating the Ommen decision. However, after more discussion the proposal was defeated.

Pope calls for Christian unity and examination of his own ministry

Apologizes for past divisions

Marian Van Til

VATICAN CITY — Pope John Paul II has called for new discussion among Christians of his own authority and ministry — a matter which *The Catholic Register* calls "one of the thorniest issues dividing Christians."

The call included an apology to non-Catholics for "times when Catholics have contributed to the divisions among Christians and for ways in which Catholics have contributed to other Christians' difficulty in accepting the ministry of the bishop of Rome," says *The Register*.

"The Catholic Church's conviction that in the ministry of the bishop of Rome she has preserved, in fidelity to the apostolic tradition and the faith of the Fathers, the visible sign and guarantor of unity, constitutes a difficulty for most other Christians, whose memory is marked by certain painful recollections," John Paul admitted. " Then he added: "To the extent that we are responsible for these, I join my predecessor Paul VI in asking forgiveness."

These statements were made in an encyclical, released May 30, called *Ut unum Sint* ("That They May Be One"). In the document John Paul asserts that "the unity of all Christians is God's will and is at the heart of the mission Christ entrusted to his followers." The encyclical concludes with a call to all Christians to "renew their commitment to work for full and visible communion." The Pope called on his own bishops to "be especially mindful" of their mission and duty to work for Christian unity.

Christ's work can unite us

John Paul declares that "all the sins of the world were gathered up in the saving sacrifice of Christ, including the sins committed against the church's unity: the sins of Christians, those of pastors no less than those of the lay faithful."

"Christians must enter into dialogue motivated by love and with a humble awareness that mistakes and offences were made by both sides," says *The Register*, paraphrasing the encyclical.

The Pope stresses that unity does not rule out "legitimate diversity," but, in fact, "enhances [the church's] splendor and contributes greatly to the fulfillment of her mission."

To achieve that unity there must be agreement on the following issues: "The relationship between sacred Scripture, as the highest authority in matters of faith, and sacred tradition, as indispensable to the interpretation of the Word of God; the meaning of the Eucharist; ordination as a sacrament; church teaching on Mary; the teaching authority of the Pope and bishops."

The very real differences on these issues must not lead people to give up praying or working for unity, John Paul II concluded.

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The inscription from Dan

Al Wolters
CHAPTER & VERSE

"In the twelfth year of Joram [=Jehoram] *son of Ahab king of Israel, Ahaziah son of Jehoram* [=Joram] *king of Judah began to reign... Ahaziah went with Joram son of Ahab to war against Hazael king of Aram at Ramoth Gilead"* (2 Kings 8:25,28, NIV).

Joram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah are relatively insignificant kings who lived in the middle of the ninth century B.C. It was a time period that is familiar to Bible readers from the stories of the prophets Elijah and Elisha — stories that are dominated by the prophetic denunciation of Baal worship and the wars of both northern and southern kingdoms against the Aramean kings.

A recent archeological discovery has focused scholarly attention on this period and on the two kings mentioned in the above passage. An Israeli archeological team has been doing excavations for many years on the site of biblical Dan. In 1993 the team discovered a fragmentary Aramaic inscription which could be dated to about the middle of the ninth century B.C., and which contained the phrases "king of Israel" and "House of David."

Apparently this inscription had been set up in Dan by an Aramean ruler who boasted of having conquered Dan and having defeated the Israelite kings of both the northern kingdom ("Israel") and the southern kingdom ("the House of David"). Unfortunately, the inscription is quite fragmentary and does not contain the names of the kings involved.

Quite a stir

When this inscription was published last year it created quite a stir. Here was an authentic witness to the history of ancient Israel which seemed to fit in well with the biblical account of the wars between Aram and Israel in the mid-ninth century. Moreover, the inscription appears to designate the southern kingdom of Judah by the dynastic name "House of David," which of course has powerful messianic overtones. Once again, it seemed, the findings of archaeology appeared to dovetail nicely with the facts recorded in the Bible.

However, there was no dearth of scholars who hastened to say that this archaeological find really did not match the Bible at all. The whole story of David and the later breakup of his kingdom was really a fiction created by Israelite writers who lived hundreds of years later. These scholars pointed out that the expression "House of David" was written as one word in the inscription, and argued that it therefore could hardly be taken as a reference to a real historical person and a real historical kingdom.

New fragments found

But then, in 1994, two additional fragments of the same inscription were found. These two fragments were published in an Israeli journal which came out just last month. It appears that this time traces of the names of two biblical kings are among the excavated bits of writing: "...ram son of..." and "...iah son of..." The two editors of the new fragments have proposed that these traces were part of an original sequence which read "Jehoram son of Ahab, king of Israel" and "Ahaziah son of Jehoram, king of the House of David." In other words, the inscription mentions precisely the two kings mentioned in our text.

Fits the evidence

Such a reading appears to fit all of the archaeological and biblical evidence. According to the editors, this means that the Aramean ruler who wrote this inscription was Hazael, the very king with whom the Bible here says Joram and Ahaziah were at war.

It will be interesting to see what biblical scholars will make of this new evidence. Some will undoubtedly continue to argue that it does nothing to confirm the historicity of the biblical account. But others will gratefully accept this find as further confirmation of the reliability of biblical history.

Al Wolters teaches Bible and Greek at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont. Ancient Aramaic is one of his hobbies.

Church leaders in G-7 countries call for reform of monetary fund and World Bank

TORONTO (Canadian Council of Churches) — Church leaders from G-7 countries have issued a joint ecumenical statement coinciding with the Halifax G-7 meeting. The churches have called on the G-7 government leaders to take steps to reform the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, and to cancel or substantially reduce multilateral debt, especially for the poorest countries.

The statement was made public last week by the Canadian Council of Churches and endorsed by the Councils of Churches in Japan, the United States, Italy, Britain and Ireland. It calls on G-7 leaders to recognize their special responsibility to ensure a more just international community.

Observing that "disparities between north and south and within countries in the north are greater now than in the past," the churches argue that G-7 countries have a particular responsibility to address these injustices because their policies have global impact and they exercise a decisive influence over the policies of the World Bank, and the IMF.

Speaking for themselves as well as their partners in Africa, Asia and Latin America, the church leaders also called on G-7 to:

* Replace structural adjustment programmes with policies and projects that meet the needs of the poor and promote sustainable, participatory, and equitable development;

* Cancel or substantially reduce multilateral debt, especially for the poorest countries;

* Support efforts to implement a tax on international financial transactions as a way to curb the negative effects of currency speculation and a means of raising funds for international development;

* Make employment creation and interest rate reduction a priority over cuts in government spending on social programs and international development assistance as a means of reducing government deficits.

The ecumenical statement addressed to G-7 leaders concludes with the affirmation that "solutions can be found to ensure that our world moves in the direction of common security for all, rather than protection of the privilege of a few."

Five hundred Christians killed weekly in Algeria

ALGIERS, Algeria (EP) — Approximately 500 Christians in Algeria are killed by Islamic extremists every week, according to diplomatic sources.

Members of the Islamic Salvation Front are reportedly "purifying" Algeria of non-Muslims, including Christians, Jews and Communists. The Armed Islamic Group, the most extreme of the Islamic militant groups in Algeria, has declared a campaign of "annihilation and physical liquidation of Christian Crusaders," according to the *Middle East Digest.*

Several expatriate Christians have been killed and the indigenous Algerian church is "feeling increasingly vulnerable," said the publication.

The only Christian bookshop in Algeria, located in Algiers, closed its doors in March 1994 after staff members were told they would "disappear" unless they did so.

According to the International Christian Embassy, virtually all Algerian Christians have converted from Islam. Under Islamic law, adult male apostates from Islam may be punished by death.

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Feature

Dig below the surface of

the Greatest Book ever written

In this article a young adult relates how he learned to appreciate the Bible better by seeing it as literature. James Geuzebroek makes a lot of worthwhile points as he takes us through some of the unnecessary divisions and arguments caused by a literalistic interpretation of Scripture. We do not fully endorse some of the conclusions he draws, but we consider his experience valid and we appreciate that his faith has been strengthened by a new way of reading the Bible.

We think that a literary approach to the Bible is only one approach that yields various results, depending on the Scripture passage or book you read. We don't believe that Geuzebroek would read the story of the birth of Jesus as a parable, for example, although that is the impression he leaves. Well-known Canadian scholar Northrop Frye has made the literary study of the Bible through archetypes popular, but this has not been recognized by Reformed scholars as an approach that replaces sound theology or even faithful Bible reading. **BW**

James Geuzebroek

"This is why I speak to them in parables:
Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear
or understand.

In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah:
You will be ever hearing but never understanding:
you will be ever seeing but never perceiving" (Matthew 13:13-14).

Jesus spoke in parables because he knew something about human nature; that is, we human beings tend to ignore or misunderstand important concepts unless those ideas are put into a context which we easily comprehend. Hence, Christ told multi-layered stories which on the surface spoke about seemingly unimportant, human events (like a farmer sowing his seed), but which outlined meaningful truths about God at a deeper level. The stories themselves would be directed at Jesus' particular audience of 2,000 years ago, while the more important messages possess universal meaning.

As an English major I have great appreciation for Jesus' style of story-telling. It carries the mark of great literature — the telling of a story which contains a deeper meaning that must be uncovered and interpreted. Stories with deep meaning separate writers whose works stand the test of time and continue to have meaning for humankind (like Shakespeare), from writers who are only popular in their own day and age (e.g., Stephen King). It is not so much Shakespeare's "outdated" stories that maintain his popularity, but their richness in meaning and possible interpretation.

God-infused meaning

And what greater work of literature is there than the Holy Bible? Shakespeare has managed to survive a few hundred years, but the Bible remains a best-seller after thousands. Like other classic works of literature, the Bible was written by people for the audience of their time; but it is unique because its creation was guided by the Holy Spirit. As a result, it is remarkable in its depth, complexity and cohesion, considering it was written by many writers through many ages.

While it was imperfect men who put quill to scroll and told stories as they knew them, it was God's hand which infused the Book with its depth and meaning. For this reason it is not a book to be read always at face-value. To do so robs it of its divine beauty. It would be like "hearing but never understanding, seeing but never perceiving."

Take for instance, the story of Samson. This is an entertaining story, complete with a super-strong hero, a villainess, and assorted "bad guys." Recently, someone asked me: "Why is Samson's strength in his hair?" Had this been a Stephen King story there would be no point in asking — we could just take this detail for granted. But we are dealing with God's Book; hence, we can assume there is a reason for everything.

While I obviously cannot claim to know the answer, it seems to me that God's gift of strength residing in Samson's hair can serve as a marvellous image. It shows that amongst "the powers of this dark world" (Ephesians 6:12), God's gifts are vulnerable. If we are not careful and strong in spirit, they can be lost to us as easily as hair can be snipped away.

But another characteristic of hair is that it always grows back, deliberate and unstoppable. In our wicked world, we can easily lose sight of God's gifts and support, but he does not give up, and is as persistent as growing hair in making himself recognized.

Whether every detail of the Samson story is factual or not, we can thank the writer of Judges for putting an interesting story on paper. And more importantly, we can thank God for guiding its writing, and filling it with underlying messages about himself and about how we should live.

A story about a man whose immense strength is in his hair does not, in itself, have much meaning to us anymore; but the untold elements which are open to interpretation give biblical passages their true life and universal nature. As with Jesus' parables it is valuable to look past the surface to find what is really important.

Unnecessary divisions

Literal, surface readings of the Bible create problems that need not exist, such as the division between Christianity and science which developed when evolutionary theory put the creation story into question. With both sides of the issue assuming that Genesis 1 meant exactly what it said, the situation arose in which one had to believe in either creation or evolution. Now, it is more widely acknowledged that if the first chapter of the Bible is interpreted as a symbolic representation of the earth's gradual creation, it is actually quite compatible with evolution.

In both theories, all of God's creatures come into being in virtually the same order. Rather than being an extensive, scientific analysis of how each creature slowly developed into the next (culminating with us — God's greatest and favored creatures), Genesis is a concise telling of a long process.

To believe in evolution is not to disbelieve the Bible, because it makes perfect sense that God was the guiding force behind the intricately complex process of evolution. Something so marvellous could not have "just happened" without the masterminding work of the Great Creator. What should be focused upon when reading Genesis 1 is the remarkable fact that biblical writers (Moses) had insight into the order and process of the universe's creation thousands of years before scientists began to uncover facts to support it.

GOOD NEWS BIBLE

The sower from Jesus' parable.

Regardless of the fact that we are beginning to see the compatibility of evolution and the Creation story, a gulf has been created between science and Christianity that may never be fully overcome. Despite them not being incompatible, they continue to be seen as opposing forces. And it seems this unfortunate alienation from each other could have been avoided had both sides read the Bible symbolically — like a parable putting something in simple terms, but meaning so much more.

My own faith was saved when I learned the joys of reading the Bible this way. There was a time shortly before I began studying English at school when I was tired of Christianity. The Bible, and the church, seemed (as they often do to young people) outdated and ridiculous — unable to offer any answers in our confusing modern world.

"As I stand on the threshold of adulthood," thought I, "fearing an uncertain future, how can I find solace in an institution which still wonders if women should be officebearers?"

But then I found myself in classes in which I studied the Bible as a literary textbook, rather than as a straightforward guide to life. I discovered there was so much more in this Book, and that its underlying meanings are universal and could have significance for me. It was invigorating and my faith is stronger now than ever.

I am certain that teaching others, and especially young people, to read the Bible symbolically is critical in maintaining interest in the church. As the years go by and technology reaches unimaginable heights, it will be increasingly difficult for people of the future to relate to an ancient book about a baby who was born in a stable. So let us help people focus on the universal meanings of the Bible — the ones which can be found below the surface. Let us show the world how to understand and perceive the complex Word of God, rather than simply hearing and seeing it. The future of Christianity may depend on it.

James Geuzebroek is a graduate of Trent University. He is a member of Bethel Christian Reformed Church in Newmarket, Ont., where he lives.

Feature

Out of the mouth of babes

A true story

(Names and certain details have been changed.)

Berta Hosmar

"What if John is busy two weeks from now, or his truck breaks down and he can't help me move?" wailed Sharon. "What am I going to do then? My new apartment will be empty and I'll probably have to sleep in the park, and then I may get mugged or maybe even raped or killed, and then what?"

"If John promised to help you I'm sure he will; otherwise we'll find another solution. Just relax," I said to sooth her.

But Sharon refused to be comforted. She kept coming up with all sorts of gruesome possibilities that might happen if her furniture should not arrive on moving day.

In my heart I was getting a little impatient with Sharon. She had been discharged from the hospital just recently after taking yet another drug overdose — her fifth. I knew she had problems, but I also knew she was thoroughly enjoying her performance. In the meantime she was disturbing the rather peaceful atmosphere at our Christian drop-in centre where I volunteer.

Staff and guests of Gate 3:16 (a Christian drop-in centre in Oshawa, Ont.) take an outing to see the fall colors.

Running out of money

It had been a rather hectic morning. It would be a few days yet until the various disability, welfare or unemployment insurance cheques would be issued, and every month this was the busiest time at the centre. People had run out of money by this time of month, and they knew that coffee and donuts and sandwiches were always available here.

When I first started to come here I had a difficult time accepting the fact that most of the visitors were unemployed. I saw seemingly healthy individuals, young and old, wasting their days on the streets or at our centre, and I felt that everybody should be rehabilitated and put to work.

"When you get to know the people a little better, you'll find out that most of them are unemployable," the co-ordinator told me. It did not take me too long to realize he was right.

Many struggle with drug or alcohol addiction, some have a criminal record. Single mothers and pregnant girls, some as young as 14 or 15 come here. People who have been discharged from mental hospitals and now live in group homes visit frequently, and so do prostitutes, pimps and people suffering from AIDS.

Many have lost contact with their families and are looking for companionship. One has to get used to their rather unconventional lifestyles, but as staff and volunteers you learn to love and not condemn, to accept and not judge.

Laughter and sharing

The drop-in centre is not a sad place. There's a lot of laughter here and good-natured teasing. People are fiercely loyal to each other and often share the little they have. Just this morning, Betty, a bag lady, handed the co-ordinator a bunch of flowers. Who knows, she might have stolen them from someone's garden, but you learn not to ask certain questions.

"Come on Sharon, stop your blubbering, you're bugging us!" exploded Glen, who was playing a game of checkers with Peter. For a moment Sharon obeyed. I breathed a sigh of relief. I made a fresh pot of coffee and a tray with day-old donuts arrived from the coffee shop next door.

The co-ordinator was counselling a pregnant teenager in his office, but I felt confident I could hold the fort for a while. I looked around.

About eight men were occupying the two chesterfields. Some were staring straight ahead, probably recovering from hangovers, some were dozing. Some looked clean, others unkempt. I counted 16 people in the room, most of whom I knew by now.

Regular clients

There was Greg, in his early 30s, just released from jail. He had a problem with alcohol and had tried several times, unsuccessfully, to kick the habit by going to a detox centre. When sober, he was a lovable guy, but when under alcohol's influence he became violent.

I looked at Glenda, a 15-year-old runaway, pregnant for the second time. Her first baby was in the care of Children's Aid, but she had vowed that this time she would take care of the baby herself. But how can a child take care of a child? I wondered.

Bill was munching on a donut. I would have to take the tray away from the table — Bill, already grossly overweight, would eat half a dozen.

He never caused problems unless provoked. He was mentally slow; if one wanted to label him, he would be called developmentally disabled. He did not believe in taking showers and walked around with three-day-old stubble on his face. But he had kind eyes and sometimes attended the Bible study.

How much he took in was hard to say. The co-ordinator would try to include him in discussions but Bill would unfailingly mumble: "Heaven is beautiful, with streets of gold," and then snatch another donut.

It was not possible to have a meaningful conversation with him, so I often more or less ignored him when it was busy.

The rather peaceful atmosphere was shattered when Sharon decided she needed attention again.

"Now, are you all going to just sit there and let me suffer two weeks from now if John can't help me when I have to move?" she sobbed, and when nobody reacted immediately she worked herself up into a frenzy.

"Not her again!" sighed Glen, getting up, ready to leave. The phone rang, and while I answered it a visitor staggered in, obviously drunk.

I tried to stay calm: first things first, no sense disturbing the co-ordinator yet to ask for help. After I hurriedly finished the call I led the latest arrival to a chair and gave him some coffee.

It took a few moments to get him to drink it. He spilled it and I kept refilling his cup and mopping up the mess.

Sharon's loud lamenting in the background did nothing to increase the smattering of serenity still left in me.

"If Sharon would just keep her mouth shut, I might be able to handle this," I muttered under my breath as the wailing grew louder.

Unexpected solace

Then something totally unexpected happened.

Slowly Bill heaved his bulk from the chair and moved towards Sharon. He took her hands and started to stroke them with his chubby ones. "Now relax Sharon, just relax, hold my hands," Bill crooned and Sharon stopped in midsentence, totally astonished.

"Now, everything is all right, just listen to me," Bill pleaded. "Just let your worries go, just let them go."

Continued on page 12...

PHOTOS COURTESY GATE 3:16

Before Bible study, staff and guests of Gate 3:16 gather to sing.

Features

Out of the mouth of babes

...continued from page 11

Then, in a soft but rather melodious baritone he started to sing: "Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so," while Sharon looked at him wonderingly. Bill kept singing and slowly a trace of a smile appeared on Sharon's face.

Several people were watching and I held my breath. "That's it Sharon, Jesus loves you and heaven is beautiful, with streets of gold" Bill told her after he noticed that Sharon was now calm. He let go of her hands, took another donut and sat down quietly.

After a brief pause Sharon announced happily: "I'll go home now and talk to John about his truck. Maybe I don't have to sleep in the park when it's thundering and lightning after all." After she had left I took Bill's hands and looked into his eyes. *Out of the mouth of babes,* I thought.

I realized that by virtually ignoring Bill because I figured I was too busy with others and he was no trouble anyway, I had never discovered his gentle spirit.

"Bill," I said, "Jesus heard you talk to Sharon and he's smiling at you and saying to you: 'Well done, Bill.'"

Berta Hosmar is a periodic contributor to Christian Courier. *She lives in Whitby, Ont.*

COURTESY GATE 3:16

Morning coffee time at Gate 3:16.

Mary Magdalene

John Valk

One of the Gospels' most intriguing, and perhaps mystifying, characters is Mary Magdalene. Though mentioned only briefly, her name surfaces in contexts significant in the ministry of Jesus Christ. She was known to be one of Jesus' closest female followers. She was also the first witness to his resurrection. Yet Mary Magdalene may also be one of the most misrepresented, if not maligned, women mentioned in the Scriptures. That is the result, argues Susan Haskins in her new book *Mary Magdalene: Myth and Metaphor* (New York, 1993), of incorrect exegesis, cultural biases and male disregard.

Mary Magdalene is always mentioned first in the groups of women who followed Jesus. She is the one from whom "seven demons" had been exorcised (Luke8:2). We may infer from the biblical number seven, which frequently indicates completeness or fullness, that her situation had been rather severe.

Yet the text does not elaborate on the nature of these "demons," whether they represented spiritual, psychological or physical turmoil, corruption or illness. Neither is there any inference, in this or any other context, that demon possession was synonymous with moral or sexual sin.

C.C. FILES

Mary Magdalene meets Jesus after his resurrection.

Women provided hospitality

Upon her restoration, Mary Magdalene becomes a devoted follower of Jesus. She, along with other women, provided, out of their own means, for Jesus and the 12 disciples. Interestingly, it was women, not men, who were hospitable to this itinerant preacher and his male associates as they travelled from city to village.

Mary Magdalene is mentioned next, in all four gospels, at the crucifixion. She and the other women followed Jesus to the bitter end, his cruel and agonizing death on the cross — such was their devotion. Later they went to the tomb to anoint his body in preparation for a proper burial. They discover it missing. With devastated hearts they leave. But Mary Magdalene remains at the tomb weeping. Suddenly a resurrected Jesus appears before her. After speaking briefly, he gives her a most important commission: she must tell the others what she has just witnessed.

Women's testimony not valid then

The Scriptures thereafter fall silent regarding Mary Magdalene's involvements in the early church movement. Paul, whose written account of the resurrection is actually the earliest, excludes her altogether as the first witness. Perhaps he did so because he recognized that the testimony of women was inadmissable in legal contexts in that culture. That is evidenced by the writings of the platonic philosopher Celsus. In his critique of Christianity (*The True Word* c. 175 AD), he discounts the resurrection because it was witnessed by a "hysterical woman."

Yet the memory of Mary Magdalene has been preserved, and we find frequent reference to her in ecclesiastical history. However, she comes down to us as Mary Magdalene the penitent prostitute. She is linked to a passage mentioning a woman "who was a sinner," one who anointed Jesus' feet. The "sin" of this woman is identified as prostitution.

In Luke the passage comes just prior to the first mention of Mary Magdalene. Improper exegesis then quickly seals her fate, and she is depicted thereafter in numerous sermons, meditations, writings, paintings, even photographs, from the early centuries to the present day, as the devoted follower of Jesus who turned away from a life of sexual immorality.

She even has the "honor" of having houses of refuge for street prostitutes named after her. Two modern films also perpetuate this tradition. Martin Scorsese's *The Last Temptation of Christ* and Denys Arcand's *Jesus of Montreal* portray her as a woman of ill-repute who is attracted to Jesus. According to Haskins, ecclesiastical history has grossly misrepresented, even defamed, the character of Mary Magdalene.

Distorting the true picture

Certain Gnostic writings of the first to fourth centuries portray Mary Magdalene in more favorable light, even giving her prominence above other disciples. But as these writings become increasingly heretical, what remained were the portrayals of the early Church Fathers, who viewed her "only" as the penitent whore. Such characterization in a church now overwhelmingly male dominated, served to limit her stature as a faithful disciple of Jesus.

It is difficult to uncover a clear picture of Mary Magdalene from the scarce details available. We do not know what kind of leadership she came to exercise, if any. Yet it is necessary to correct misconceptions derived from sloppy exegesis, and their perpetuation through church tradition.

Susan Haskins has done a great service in exposing these misconceptions. She reminds us that such misconceptions frequently prevent us from fully appreciating the significant role women played in bearing witness to Jesus Christ in the early church. That has had severe consequences, even to the present day.

John Valk is a Christian Reformed chaplain at the University of New Brunswick. He lives in Fredericton, N.B.

From Internet to 'Innernet' to 'Sinnernet' to...?

Economic Housekeeping

Bert Hielema

Time magazine devoted a special issue to *Cyberspace* — also called the Net, the Web, the Cloud, the Matrix, the Metaverse, the Datasphere, the Electronic Frontier, but most commonly, the Internet — that magic information highway, known as Info-Bahn in Europe, on which people can electronically communicate with each other, also in the form of e-mail (electronic mail). Now everybody is on e-mail, from the Pope to Billy Graham, as well as several members of my family. So far I have resisted the temptation. For how long?

Cyberspace is now proclaimed to be the "land of knowledge." And everybody is buying it. I checked my *Globe and Mail* and saw 12 conferences or seminars on the Internet advertised for June alone. So, I thought it was time to write about it. (Writing a column is, for me, an excellent exercise in gaining understanding.)

When I bought my computer a couple of years ago, I had a notion that something extra was needed, so I had a modem installed as well as a CD-ROM drive and a sound system. Now all I have to do is phone CompuServe or Prodigy or America On-line and for a monthly fee of $25 plus telephone charges I can become hooked into the Internet.

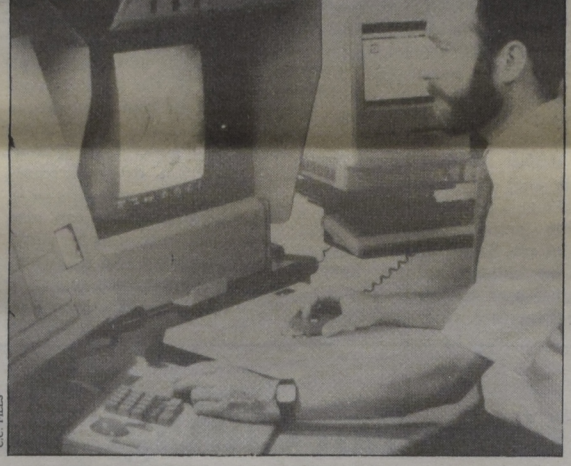
Too good to be true?

But I won't do this just yet. I am a penny pincher, sometimes, and hate to pay money for something I am not quite at ease with. The hype sounds too good to be true, I think, or should I say the things I read seem too true to be good. Whatever is the case, at this point everybody is rushing the Net, and by everybody I mean the large and small telephone and cable companies, both local and long distance and also lots of individuals.

My advice is: wait. For one thing, predictions are the competition will drive down the monthly subscription to next to nothing, just for the telephone or cable charges. Not since the advent of television have communication companies been so excited about a new means of personal interaction. Also, since my computer works with WINDOWS I am looking forward to WINDOWS 95, a new program by Microsoft due in August this year, which will include the Microsoft Network and promises to let anyone with a PC (Personal Computer) and a telephone line "find an answer to virtually any question, identify and communicate with like-minded people all over the world, transact household business and entertain myself and my family all without ever moving from my seat."

Begun by U.S. military

I better tell you how the Internet was born. It is a child of the Cold War and created by the U.S. Defense Department in 1960 to operate independently, thus without central authority, so that the network would not collapse in case of a nuclear attack. It originally connected only military installations, government labs and defense contractors, then expanded to include universities, and now has set the world on fire in a way its designers never imagined. "Computers all over the world link files and relay messages and it has sparked an explosion of innovation," says *Time*.



C.C. FILES

At first those connected to the Internet were a rather exclusive lot: their average age, 31; mostly male; average income $65,000 (U.S.), some 70 per cent of whom had at least one college degree — quite a distinct group. Now every month some 175,000 new people plug into this service. Worldwide there are some 30 million people connected to the Net.

There is something peculiarly typical about this new phenomenon. It is an extremely individualistic affair. It is like welding a person to a machine, like a human-machine marriage. The curious part is that these persons, still more male than female, reveal their most intimate thoughts to complete strangers while, of course, remaining anonymous themselves. Clifford Stoll, an astronomer who 20 years ago tracked down a German spy ring operating over the Net selling secrets to the KGB, says about this:

"Anonymity on the screen creates an other-ness in behavior that says, 'Hey, I'm 2,000 miles away, you can't do anything to me, you don't even know my name!' The type of anger you find coming across the modem is like the type of momentary anger between drivers on a rush hour highway."

Sin isn't left behind

Perhaps the thing should be called Innernet. These inner feelings often are sexually explicit, so much so that for a $50 (U.S.) setup fee and for $6 per month, people can buy *Surfwatch*, which automatically blocks out from the thousands of Internet news groups, those dealing with bestiality, bondage, erotica, pornography — programs parents would not want their youngsters to see. Maybe a better name still is *Sinnernet*, as the screening out applies only to a very limited number of on-line services.

Crime is also making its way into Cyber City. Clever people can infiltrate computer systems and steal credit card numbers. Since nobody owns the system, prosecution is difficult and thus anything goes, from betting to roulette, from information on the Bernardo trial to neo-Nazi messages from Zundel. The RCMP now has a special branch dealing with the rapidly expanding area of computer crime.

The Internet is touted by its 800-page guide book as "by far the greatest and most significant achievement in the history of mankind." Well, is it? Many people, especially educators, think so. Are they correct?

I am always suspicious when large companies push a product. Time Warner, the company that publishes *Time* magazine, has a five billion dollar investment in this type of communication and if it does not catch on, is bound to lose this. It also has a $15 billion debt. So, no wonder that the special *Time* spring issue entitled "Welcome to Cyberspace" has only words of praise for the new way to communicate information and entertainment.

Overblown importance

That the Internet has a place and potential is beyond doubt. Yet at present, I think that its importance is grossly overblown. The process to find information is so complicated that an expert on *Morningside* interviewed by Peter Gzowski described it as "a library where all the books are on the floors, chained to each other and the room is dark." Clifford Stoll, in his recent book called *Silicon Snake Oil* expresses second thoughts on the information highway as well.

According to him this highway is being sold to us as delivering information, but what it's really delivering is data. "Numbers, bits, bytes, but little information. Unlike data, information has utility, timelessness, accuracy. But data, coming across AmericaOnLine or CompuServe or whatever — is something nobody stands behind. The *Economist* magazine commented on this too.

"Most people prefer to see human development as a slow progression towards something more sophisticated: stone age, iron age, bronze age, age of reason, age of enlightenment, age of analysis, age of (ugh) information. In, with the computer, came the raw, untreated flow of data: out, at least by implication, went the ability to discriminate between useful and useless, good and bad, interesting and dull."

"Has humanity come full circle, back towards the stone-age starting point, a fact-filled oblivion, with no teeth, no eyes, no taste, no everything?" wonders the *Economist*.

We are indeed better informed, but none the wiser. As a matter of intuition, to me it seems that the greater the amount of information at our disposal, the more difficult it becomes for us to see through the maze of data and detect real wisdom. I am not a person who believes in conspiracies. Yet, I think that those big information providers, such as Time Warner, A.T.&T., the Bell companies and others are banking on our stupidity to overwhelm us with irrelevant stuff so that they can sell us a bill of goods and so further alienate us from our roots and from the real wisdom which has its origin in the fear of the Lord — of which the eyeball to eyeball encounters with real people and the down to earth contact with the real creation is an important part.

Bert Hielema lives in Tweed, Ont. He occasionally plays Solitaire on his computer but uses it mostly to complete narrative appraisals for which he has devised his own program.

How can parents deal with children who leave the church?

Dear P & M:

In the past year I have heard (and heard of) at least three Christian Reformed ministers, not to mention laypersons, who blame parents for the lifestyle choices of their adult children, particularly if these children no longer attend church. Leaving the church is then equated with losing the faith.

I believe Christian parents have a responsibility to bring their children up in the faith. I also believe that when children are of age (18 or so), they are responsible for their own choices. It is painful when these choices sometimes clash with the way they were raised. I speak from experience.

Why do ministers paint an idyllic picture of the "perfect Christian family" from the pulpit and send their parishioners home without comfort to the harsh realities of their imperfect families? Is this biblical? Why admonish those who already spend sleepless nights worrying about the children they nurtured to the best of their abilities? Don't they know we are already hurting and that we agonize over the spiritual well-being of our children?

The book of Proverbs says: "Train a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it." Only the Lord knows the timing, i.e. the meaning of the word "old." Lamentably, many CRC members and pastors have determined "old" to mean when a person is 18 and should be making a public profession of faith. Meanwhile, those of us whose children do not fit that mould will continue to pray for them and give them the same unconditional love which the Lord gives to us.

Dear Parent In Pain:

If parents are fully to blame for the choices their children make, what are we to think about God? He's the perfect Father, yet his children chose to disobey him and go their own way! Now he's the Father-in-waiting, longing for the return of his prodigal sons and daughters. And isn't it interesting that the rebellious son in that parable is the one who comes through with his heart in the right place while the obedient son is consumed by jealousy and anger?

Turning to the Old Testament, we are quick to point to Eli and his immoral sons Hophni and Phinehas (I Samuel 2:22-25). See, we quickly conclude, that's what happens when you do a poor job as a parent. But we overlook the fact that Eli did rebuke his sons, although he did not remove them from office (:24). And we tend to forget that Samuel's two sons, Joel and Abijah, also "turned aside after dishonest gain and accepted bribes and perverted justice" in their positions as judges (I Samuel 8:3). Eli was a weak father figure while Samuel was spiritually strong and close to the Lord. And yet both fathers were parents in pain because of the lifestyle choices of their adult children.

The way we lovingly rear our children does have a huge impact on their development. Parents are responsible for "training a child in the way of the Lord." But there are many other influences that also have an impact on the lives of our kids. They are the same influences that keep all of us from being "perfect." We're talking about sin, Satan and the world. As our children become young adults, peer and societal pressures increase while our parenting role decreases. How hard it is to allow this move towards independence, especially when the protective urge is so strong in us!

We also have to be careful about our assumptions. Good parenting does not automatically yield active church members; poor parenting does not necessarily yield straying children. Kids leaving the church does not necessarily equal loss of faith; kids staying in church does not necessarily indicate a personal relationship with the Lord.

We must confess that all of us have a tendency to judge. Your letter reminds us to be careful. Let's not be too quick to conclude that the home is always to blame for lack of church attendance. In addition to the reasons already given, bad experiences in their own congregation or in the Christian school can also sometimes be reasons for straying from church. So let's comfort and support each other in the face of the pressures, temptations and problems that confront every family.

There is no such thing as the perfect family. Mutual honesty would bring us all to the same conclusion: "There, but for the grace of God, go I."

Don't give up; never stop praying for your kids. They are covenant children and God is at work in their lives. And think about this, too: when they come back, it will be because they have responded to Jesus' call.

Write to: P & M
c/o Christian Courier
4-261 Martindale Road
St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1

Peter and Marja Slofstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of Herman de Jong, Bill Lidkea, Tom Zeyl, Marian Van Til and Bert Witvoet.

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Christian Cottage Industries calls it quits

GRIMSBY, Ont. — Christian Cottage Industries is scaling down its operations in order to phase itself out by the end of this year.

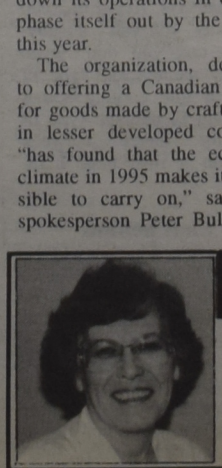
The organization, dedicated to offering a Canadian market for goods made by craftspeople in lesser developed countries, "has found that the economic climate in 1995 makes it impossible to carry on," says CCI spokesperson Peter Bulthuis of Grimsby, Ont.

CCI was born in 1983, in order to purchase craft and artwork made in Christian cottage industry settings in the Philippines, Kenya, Dominican Republic and other places, "to help enable the dignity of honest work for literally hundreds of craftspeople."

CCI's 12-year life was made possible only through its many distributors, volunteers from coast to coast, and people like Guelph warehouse co-ordinator Inge Ensing and Miriam Lammers, promotion and development co-ordinator.

Difficult decision

"As transportation costs rise, transborder complications mount, payment-in-advance requests increase, and discretionary (gift-related) income relatively decreases in Canada, the board made the very difficult decision on May 16 to terminate its operations," says Bulthuis. "The most difficult element of the decision was the recognition that the craftspeople in lesser developed countries would now have to find other avenues to sell their products."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All other one-column classified advertisements: $15.00 per column inch. NOTE: Minimum fee is $15.00. Letter under file number $35.00 extra. Photos: $25.00 additional charge.

Note: All rates shown above are GST inclusive

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b) A sheet with information about an obituary sent by funeral homes is *not* acceptable since it leads to errors and confusion.

c) Photographs sent by fax *are not* acceptable. If you wish a photo included, send us the original.

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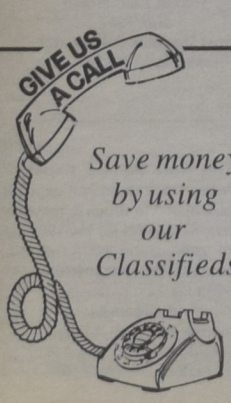


Thank You

SJAARDA:

We wish to express our sincere thanks to all who remembered us on the occasion of our 60th wedding anniversary. Your visits, cards and flowers were very much appreciated. A special thank you to our children and grandchildren for making it an unforgettable day. Above all we give thanks and praise to our heavenly Father for keeping us in His care.

Uiltje and Kristje Sjaarda, Shalom Manor, 12 Bartlett Ave., Grimsby, ON L3M 4A5

Births

BOESSENKOOL:

After being blessed with five sons, the Lord has blessed us with four granddaughters. Harry and Joanne and sons Jeff, Duane and Randall, Surrey, B.C., with their parents praise the Lord, the creator of life for:

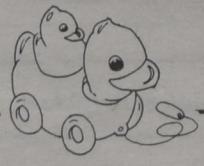
JANELLE MARIE
(8 lbs., 9 oz.)

born on Nov. 25, 1994, to Ken and Tammy. Sister of Courtney, Ottawa, Ont. Other grandparents: Don and Pat McLeod. Great-grandmothers: Jean May and Bertha Tuininga.

KAITLYN RENEE
(8 lbs., 9 oz.)

born on May 17, 1995, to Brian and Sharlene. Sister of Jessica, Surrey, B.C. Other grandparents: Tony and Harmina Jansen. Great-grandparents: Anton and Mensje Jansen, Klaas and Anna Siebring and Bertha Tuininga. Great-great-grandparents: Anton and Margareth Jansen.

We will praise you, O Lord, with all our hearts; we will tell of your wonders. (Psalm 9:1.)



BOOMSMA:

With praise and thanks to God, Rob and Betty (DeJager) announce the birth of a son

RYAN MARTIN

born May 30, 1995, weighing 8 lbs., 4 oz.

Grateful grandparents are Anthony and Jane DeJager, Sarnia, Ont., and Martin and Helen Boomsma, Georgetown, Ont.

Also sharing in their joy is great-grandmother Jane Boomsma, Brantford, Ont.

Address: R.R. #1, S25, C39, Smithers, BC V0J 2N0

Birthdays

BEIMERS:

Congratulations to Margaret Beimers on the occasion of her 85th birthday!

Happy 85th birthday Mom.

MARGARET BEIMERS

With love from your children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

May God bless you many more years.

Address: 94 Mc Cartny Rd., Stratford, ON N5A 2K2

VISSERS:

Congratulations to our dad

HERBERT VISSERS

who will celebrate his 90th birthday on July 8, 1995.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

His children:
Bert & Nelly
Ita & Anton
Hank & Gertie
Alida & Nick

14 grandchildren and 27 great-grandchildren wish him God's continued blessings.

Address: 33433 Marshall Rd., Abbotsford, BC V9R 6L3

Personal

WHY NOT?

The **Christian Marriage Contact Service** assists men and women in the USA and Canada who would like to marry or remarry.

Why not write to us at C.M.C.S.?
Enclose $5.00 for our information package.
P.O. Box 93090
Burlington, Ontario, Canada
L7M 4A3

More male members are encouraged to apply.

Birthdays

SIPKENS:

HELEN SIPKENS

will celebrate her 90th birthday, D.V., on June 28, 1995.

Her children:
Clara & Bill Bameveld
Frances & Tony Brouwer
Earl & Janet Sipkens
Gertrude & Clarence DeJong
Stan & Leni Sipkens
Gerdy Sipkens
Agnes Sipkens
Joan & John Huizenga
Bill & Marie Sipkens

many grandchildren and many, many great-grandchildren thank God for her blessing in their lives.

Address: T.T.509-7900 McLauglin Rd. S., Brampton, ON L6V 3N2

Congratulations to Helen Sipkens on the occasion of her 90th birthday!

Congratulations to John VanderWal on the occasion of his 95th birthday!

VANDERWAL:

5 generations
Glory be to God

On June 23, 1995, we will remember the 95th birthday of

JOHN VANDERWAL

of Wyoming, Ont.

He is seen here with his son Mel of Clinton, Ont., his granddaughter Grete Eelkema of St. Thomas, Ont., his great-grandson Jeffrey Eelkema of London, Ont., and great-great-grandson Bradley.

Love from his children, 34 grandchildren, 70 great-grandchildren and six great-great-grandchildren.

Address: Box 211, Wyoming, ON N0N 1T0

Calendar of Events on page 19...

Personal

Born-again Christian, professional business executive, non-smoker, with biblical family values (attractive brown skin, Canadian, 37), **seeking female with similar believes and values**, under age 34. Please write to: **Tony, 7030 Copenhagen Rd., Unit #57, Mississauga, ON L5N 2P3; Tel. (905) 812-1238. (Please pass this information on.)**

ONE TO ANOTHER

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Write to:
#302, 1502-2nd Ave. S.
Lethbridge, AB T1J 4A2

Classifieds

Anniversaries

Congratulations to Frits and Marie De Leeuw on the occasion of their 40th wedding anniversary!

Springdale Thamesville
Ont. Ont.
1955 July 6 1995

We are happy to announce the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents

BILL and NELL GEERTSEMA
(nee NIEUWLAND)

Love and best wishes from your children and grandchildren:
John & Janet Geertsema — Barrie, Ont.
Aaron, Janelle, Katelyn, Kelly
Andrew & Lee Geertsema — Kettleby, Ont.
Guy, Mathew, Robin, Jackie, Chris, Darryl
Gary & Bonnie Geertsema — Bradford, Ont.
Jason, Shelley, Michael
Rob & Barb Geertsema — Thamesville, Ont.
Kristen, Justin, Rachel, Leah
Mark & Dianne Geertsema — Bradford, Ont.
Timothy
Monica & Dave Jessop — Beeton, Ont.
Laura, Bradley
Home address: R.R. #7, Thamesville, ON N0P 2K0

1945 June 27 1995

With praise and thanks to God, we wish our parents

GERRIT and MARGARET PRONK
(nee DOUWES)

a joyful day as they celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary.
Congratulations, with love and best wishes from your children and grandchildren.
Cathy & Don Heaton — Brampton, Ont.
Kim, Carrie
Margaret & Jack Clarke — Mississauga, Ont.
Darren, Jeff
Chris & Barrie Guy — London, Ont.
Ian, Justin, Meagan
Robert Pronk — Mississauga, Ont.
We invite friends and relatives to an open house on Saturday, July 15, 1995, from 2-4 p.m., at Harmony Hall in Holland Chr. Homes, Brampton, Ont.
Best wishes only.
Home address: 7900 McLaughlin Rd. S., Apt. PT 1203, Brampton, ON L6V 3N2

FRITS and MARIE DE LEEUW
July 16

There will be a tea in their honor to celebrate 40 years of marriage on **July 15**, 1995, from 2-4 p.m., at 3544 Canterbury Place, Regina, SK S4V 2T4.
From your children and grandchildren.
We love you, mom and dad.
We praise God for His faithfulness!

Place of marriage Brampton
the Neth. Ont.
1955 June 28 1995

Wedding text:
"..., and they recognized that they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13b).
We thank and praise God that we may celebrate the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents.

GERRITT and ANNIE BLOEMENDAL
(nee SIELIAS)

Congratulations from all of us:
Albert & Helen Bloemendal
Paul, Trevor, Peter
John & Margaret Bloemendal
Kevin, Eric, Adam
Gerald & Jenny Bloemendal
James, Jenna
Harold & Margaret Bloemendal
Bradley, Natasha
Margaret & Ron Laswick
Justin, Kelsey, Marina

Dronryp, Fr. Chilliwack, B.C.
June 28

With thanks and praise to God we wish our parents

ATE and SIETSKE SMID
(nee DE JONG)

a joyful day as they celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary.
"I will say of the Lord, 'He is my refuge and my fortress, my God in whom I trust'" (Ps.91:2).
Congratulations and love from your children and grandchildren:
Douwe & Elvira — Medicine Hat
Justin, Joel
Elsie — Burnaby
Emo & Benny — Aldergrove
Nathan, Jeremy, Brandon
Martha & Wayne — Lethbridge
Chad, Rowena, Curtis
Dagmar & Wayne — Neerlandia
Michael, Daniel, Kristin, Kimberly
The family will be celebrating, the Lord willing, on July 5, 1995.
Address: #206, 46966 Yale Rd., Chilliwack, BC V2P 2S7

Obituaries

April 28, 1911 - June 11, 1995

On June 11, 1995, the Lord took home one of his own, after a three week struggle with heart failure. In our grief we take heart in this promise:
The Lord is my light and my salvation whom shall I fear?
The Lord is the stronghold of my life of whom shall I be afraid?

CORNELIS VAN DAALEN

Much loved husband of Fenny Van Daalen (Schaaf).
Much loved father and grandfather of:
Peter & Wilma Van Daalen — Edmonton, Alta.
John, Catherine
Siebren & Nancy Van Daalen — Holland Marsh, Ont.
Philip & Juley, Karen & Dwayne (fiance), Michael, Joy
Kees & Margaret Van Daalen — London, Ont.
Avaleigh & Shane (boyfriend)
Kelly & Graham (boyfriend), Jeff, Erica, Susan
Correspondence address: Mrs. F. Van Daalen, 382 Ferndale Avenue, London, ON N6C 2Y8

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Best Bed & Breakfast
261 Nottawasaga Street
Orillia, ON L3V 3K5
Phone: (705) 326-4274

Miscellaneous

WANTED:

Help to **move my belongings to Winnipeg, Manitoba.** If you are driving West this summer and have spare room in your car, please call **Dirk Schouten (905)945-5335.**

For Rent

Ancaster, Ontario

Redeemer College rents furnished **1, 2, and 4-bedroom apartments May to August.** Enjoy our pastoral setting while visiting the Hamilton/Niagara/Toronto region. For excellent daily, weekly, and monthly rates, and for reservations call **(905) 648-2131, ext. 260.**

Job Opportunities

Job in Nova Scotia. Looking for a hardworking church-going female worker for our large dairy farm. Must have driver's licence. Be able to operate some farm machinery. Mowing, raking, maybe milking cows, etc. Live-in with family. Come and spend time this summer in our beautiful Annapolis Valley.

Heida Holstein Farm
Herman & Aida Van Hattem & Family
Phone: (902) 538-8753

Teachers

MONARCH, Alta.: Providence Chr. School is in need of a **teacher** for their **Grade 3, 4 and 5** classroom for the 1995-96 school year. Qualified teachers who have a strong commitment to Christian education and who submit to Scripture as interpreted by the Reformed confessions are encouraged to send their resume and a statement of their philosophy of education to:

Renita Timmerman
Box 1357
Fort Macleod, AB T0L 0Z0
Phone/Fax: (403) 553-2010

PICTON, Ont.: Sonrise Christian Academy, an interdenominational school, Junior K to Grade 8, requires a **principal/teacher** for the 1995-96 school year. Send your resume, statement of faith and philosophy of education to:

Chairperson
Sonrise Christian Academy
48 Johnson St., Box 845
Picton, ON K0K 2T0

For Rent

For Rent

Self-contained apartment in the **Ottawa/Morrisburg** area. Available weekly or daily, suitable for tourists.

Phone (613) 984-2853

For Rent

One-bedroom apartment for rent in **Vineland, Ont.** Fully self-contained, available July 1, 1995. Appliances/utilities included.

Call (905) 562-4908

Classifieds

Job Opportunities | **Job Opportunities** | **Job Opportunities** | **Job Opportunities** | **Bed & Breakfast**

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Interested persons should send a resume to:
Aldershot Greenhouses Ltd.
1135 Gallagher Road, Burlington, ON L7T 2M7
or fax: (905) 632-4022
For further information contact Len VanderLugt or Earl Schouten at (905) 632-9272 or (905) 689-1774.

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Qualifications: Experience with PC-based Unix, Dos/Windows, TCP/IP and xBase required. UnixWare, FoxBase/FoxPro, WordPerfect, NetWare, C, Internet, PC Hardware and ksh scripting skills are desirable.

Please respond with your resume and salary requirements by **July 7, 1995**, to:
Wm. De Jong Enterprises. Attn.: Scott De Jong, P.O. Box 39, Norwich, ON N0J 1P0, Fax: (519) 424-2399
E-Mail: scott@dejong.com

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Len & Rita Bette
459 Mosley St.,
Wasaga Beach, ON L0L 2P0
Phone: (705) 429-2420

Miscellaneous | **Miscellaneous**

Christian Courier
50th anniversary

C.C. has existed for 50 years and has launched its anniversary to celebrate five decades of Reformed, Christian journalism in Canada. This campaign will also boost our profile and intends to gain much-needed new subscriptions!
The paper's friends and suppliers have already agreed to help offset the expenses of printing and distributing a commemorative poster, church bulletin covers, and a special anniversary issue. We're asking you to help us celebrate 50 years of Christian journalism as well!

Clip and mail to Christian Courier,
4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1

❑ Yes! I want to be part of Christian Courier's 50th anniversary and celebrate Reformed, Christian journalism in Canada.

❑ Yes! I want to receive a free copy of the commemorative poster (donations over $25 only).

Please find enclosed my cheque for:

❑ $100 ❑ $50 ❑ $25 ❑ $ my donation

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____
Phone: _____ Prov.: _____ Code: _____

We cannot yet offer charitable donation receipts. Businesses can receive free advertisement space in the anniversary issue for donations exceeding $50. Please ask to receive our business sponsorship package. We gladly accept in-kind donations.

Director of Music

Inglewood Chr. Ref. Church of **Edmonton, Alta.**, requests applications for part-time **Director of Music** to give leadership in the music ministry of the congregation.
Send inquiries or letters of application to:
Inglewood Chr. Ref. Church
c/o Hanna Huibers
12330-113 Avenue, Edmonton, AB T5M 2W4

by August 1, 1995.

Miscellaneous

Celebrate
with your friends, relatives and family on special occasions by sending a meaningful gift to help deliver the **WORD**. Provide us the name and address and a celebration card will be sent.
THE BIBLE LEAGUE
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Tel.: (905) 319-9500

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Classifieds

Miscellaneous	Miscellaneous	Job Opportunities	Job Opportunities	Miscellaneous

CRAFT VENDORS WANTED!
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DOMESTIC MINISTRIES ASSISTANT - (CRWRC)
Christian Reformed Church in Canada

The **Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA)** has a temporary full-time opening (6 months) for an **assistant** in the **CRWRC office in Burlington, Ont.** The successful candidate provides essential support services to Domestic Ministries, Disaster Response Services, and Communications.

Must have a high school diploma, a good understanding of the Christian Reformed community, a pleasant and effective telephone manner, good listening and writing skills, training and experience in word processing using WordPerfect 5.1/6.0, and the ability to type 40 wpm.

A detailed job description is available upon request. For consideration, please submit a copy of your resume or application by **July 7, 1995**, to:

Director of Personnel
Christian Reformed Church in North America
P.O. Box 5070, Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8

Domestic Ministries Assistant (CRWRC)
CRCNA
Christian Reformed Church in North America

CO-ORDINATOR OF SERVICELINK
Christian Reformed Church in Canada

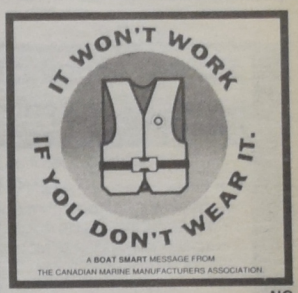
The **Christian Reformed Church in North America** is seeking applicants for the position of **Co-ordinator of ServiceLink.** ServiceLink, a new interagency program of the Christian Reformed Church in Canada, seeks to promote volunteer services to meet needs in Christ's name throughout Canada and the world. The position is responsible for the development, and administration of the recruitment, training and placement of volunteers through regional representatives across Canada. The successful candidate must have a strong vision for volunteer ministry and possess good administrative and organizational skills.

A degree in human services field required; demonstrated experience in administration, planning and organization, preferably with volunteers. Knowledge and skills in the use of computer essential.

A detailed job description is available upon request. For consideration, please submit a copy of your resume and a letter stating your interest by **July 7, 1995**, to:

Director of Personnel
Christian Reformed Church in North America
P.O. Box 5070, Burlington, ON L7R 3Y8

Co-ordinator of ServiceLink
CRCNA
Christian Reformed Church in North America



NC

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Mail to:
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St. Catharines, ON
L2W 1A1

Events/Classifieds

Events	Events	Miscellaneous	Events	Events

NC

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For more information on preventing brain injuries, call the Ontario Brain Injury Association at 1-800-263-5405.

Ontario Brain Injury Association

JUNE IS NATIONAL BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS MONTH

Calendar of Events

June 24 Special evening for Rev. Carl D. Tuyl, 7-10 p.m., 77 Donegall Dr., **Toronto**, Ont. RSVP Dian Hofstra (416) 443-0064.

June 24 Open house for Tineke Lutgendorff, 2-4 p.m., John Knox CS, 82 McLaughlin Rd. S., **Brampton**, Ont.

June 24-25 25th Anniversary of the Redeemer CRC, **Sarnia,** Ont. Open house, BBQ dinner, games, celebration on Saturday. Special worship services on Sunday. Contact Dick Meeder at (519) 542-8912 or fax (519) 542-1430.

June 25 40th anniversary service of thanksgiving at the CRC, **Kentville**, N.S. Rev. John Van Dyk, first pastor, will lead the service. Info.: (902) 678-8767 or 538-9533.

July 1 Banquet to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the CRC, **Nobleford**, Alta. Special program on July 3. Former members wishing to attend are invited to contact Tonia Schiebout at (403) 757-3837 or Bert F. Konynenbelt at (403) 824-3442.

July 1 "Frisian Picnic," 11 a.m., Pinehurst Conservation Park, Hwy. 24A, four miles north of **Paris**, Ont. We hope to see you all there!

July 1-2 40th anniversary of CRC, **Charlottetown**, PEI. Info.: Audrey Masselink, fax (902) 892-5525.

July 8 Ligonier Ministries of Canada presents "Disciplines in Grace," in **Hamilton**, Ont., with Rev. Marianno DiGangi and Jerry Bridges. Call 1-800-563-3529 to register.

July 10-28 "Summer School" at Wycliffe College and ICS, **Toronto**, Ont. For a brochure and registration details, call Ian Ritchie at (416) 979-2870 or fax (416) 979-0471.

July 12 "Hollandse Dag," 10 a.m., Caradoc Community Centre, **Mount Brydges**, Ont. Speaker: Rev. John D. Hellinga. Bring your own lunch and cup!

July 15 Fifth "Wieringermeer Picnic," 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Upper Queen's Park, **Stratford**, Ont. Please bring your own lunch!

July 17-21 "Summerfest," at Calvin College, **Grand Rapids**, Mich. Info.: (616) 957-6142.

July 23 Dutch worship service, led by Rev. John G. Klomps, 3 p.m., CRC, **Ancaster**, Ont.

Aug. 4-7 "ICS Ontario Family Conference," featuring Elaine Storkey (Christian Impact, London, England) and others, at HDCHS, **Ancaster**, Ont. Info.: (416) 979-2331.

Aug. 16 Ligonier Ministries of Canada presents "Spirit Wars," in **Guelph**, Ont., with Dr. Peter Jones, of California's Westminster Theological Seminary. Call 1-800-563-3529 to register.

Aug. 16-19 "The Arts, Community and Cultural Democracy," a Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Mich., -hosted conference. Keynote speaker: Calvin Seerveld and Nicholas Wolterstorff. Sponsored by Calvin, Dordt, ICS and Free University. Info.: (616) 957-6488.

Aug. 18-19 Ligonier Ministries of Canada presents "Upon This Rock," in **North York**, Ont., with R.C. Sproul, Peter Jones and David Wells. Call 1-800-563-3529 to register.

Aug. 19 25th Anniversary reunion, Beacon Chr. High School, **St. Catharines**, Ont. For info. phone Fran Versluis-Koole at (905) 934-5761 or fax (905) 937-1130.

Aug. 27 Dutch worship service, led by Rev. Jerry J. Hoytema, 3 p.m., CRC, **Ancaster**, Ont.

Sept.19-24 Ligonier Ministries of Canada presents "Upon This Rock," in **Charlottetown**, PEI, **Sydney**, N.S., and **Moncton**, N.B., with Rev. Eric Alexander (Glasgow, Scotland). Call 1-800-563-3529 to register.

HIRE a student.

Interview DOs

- introduce yourself
- be ready to shake hands— do it firmly
- be well-groomed, neat and clean
- dress more formally than you would normally dress for the job
- listen closely to the interviewer
- answer all questions carefully and honestly
- arrange to call back in a few days

Interview DON'Ts

- Don't take a friend
- Don't smoke or chew gum
- Don't wear a baseball cap or Walkman
- Don't act either too shy or too aggressive
- Don't say anything negative about other people
- Don't be late—if you are going to be late or can't make it to the interview, call the employer as soon as possible and explain why

from "Looking for a Job?" Available at your local CEC-S

NC

You are invited

We herewith announce a great celebration, with food, good fun and choice libation, to toast and roast

The Rev. Tuyl

"Three score and ten," he announced with a smile.

We know when we cancelled it made all of you pout,
you see Carl had his gall bladder out,
but we know you will now have room in your heart,
to celebrate with him minus one body part.

Date: June 24, 1995 (7-10 p.m.)
Place: 77 Donegall Drive, Toronto, Ont.
(2 South of Eglinton, 1 East of Bayview)
R.S.V.P.: Dian Hofstra (416) 443-0064

FRISIAN PICNIC

When? — Saturday, July 1, 1995 starting at 11 a.m.
Where? — Pinehurst Conservation Park Hwy. 24A (4 miles north of Paris, Ont.)
We hope to see you all there!
Info.: (519) 587-2162

CHRISTIAN COURIER needs TELEMARKETERS

Christian Courier's telemarketing campaign, started in 1994, continues. As of May 8, 1995, 18 communities had been canvassed yielding a total of about **300 new subscribers!** A warm thank you to all telemarketers who made this possible.

We need **local volunteers** all over Canada to conduct similar campaigns. It's too expensive to engage in telemarketing from St. Catharines. Key is: those who do the phoning must **know** the people in their community and must have a **warm heart** for CC! You can't beat the personal touch.

Don't let telemarketing scare you... it's a matter of simply phoning certain people between the hours of 5 and 7 p.m., for, say **two** or **three** evenings. We will supply you with a kit containing a) a computer printout of the subscribers in your area, and b) some simple instructions.

Christian Courier needs help! We simply need to expand our subscriber base. Please write, phone or fax me or Bert Witvoet. Thank you very much!
Stan de Jong, Business Manager.

Address: 4-261 Martindale Road, St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1
Phone: (905) 682-8311 Fax: (905) 682-8313

News

Pro-life groups criticize Senate report on euthanasia and assisted suicide

Alan Doerksen

ST.CATHARINES, Ont. — A Senate committee's recommendations on euthanasia and assisted suicide have been described as appalling and scandalous by some Christians.

The report recommends that assisted suicide and euthanasia remain illegal, but the seven senators involved were divided on some issues. Four said that Canada's laws on assisted suicide should not be changed, but three called for protection under the Criminal Code for people who assist in suicide. Five of the senators were against voluntary euthanasia, but two supported it. All seven senators agreed that there should be a new third-degree murder category called "compassionate homicide," that would carry a less severe penalty than first-degree murder.

The senators all called for Criminal Code amendments to clarify circumstances in which life-sustaining treatment could be withdrawn.

The Senate committee was formed in April 1994, shortly after Sue Rodriguez lost her Supreme Court case to legalize doctor-assisted suicide. The Rodriguez case, as well as the Robert Latimer case of last November (in which Saskatchewan farmer Latimer was convicted of second-degree murder in the killing of his 12-year-old daughter) have had an effect on the report.

One Senate committee member, Gerald Beaudoin, commented, "The question of mercy-killing like the Latimer case, should not deserve a penalty like a first-degree murder or manslaughter," reported the *Toronto Star.*

COURTESY SABINA MCLUHAN

Sabina McLuhan

In response to the Senate report, Sabina McLuhan of Campaign Life Coalition (a pro-life group based in Toronto) described the idea of 'compassionate homicide' as "absolutely appalling... We're very opposed to that."

The only part of the report CLC supports is the recommendation for an increase in funding for palliative care and for public education about it. "We are totally against assisted suicide and euthanasia. We see no distinction," says McLuhan. CLC supports Canada's present laws dealing with these issues.

Asked if the government will act on the Senate recommendations, McLuhan says, "We basically don't think there's going to be anything soon."

McLuhan comments that the Sue Rodriguez case was a strong factor in the formation of the Senate committee. Senator Joan Neiman, who chaired the committee, was also a strong force behind it, says McLuhan. "I think her sister died a very painful death from cancer."

The Latimer case also had "a definite effect" on the compassionate suicide section of the report, she suggests.

Compassion a disguise

Senate recommendations on compassionate suicide are "absolutely scandalous," says Cheryl Eckstein, president of the Compassionate Healthcare Network, which is based in Surrey, B.C.

"For Parliament to follow through with the recommendation that a murderer receive 'a less severe penalty' for killing a human being who is incapable of defending [his or her] right to life would be to unabashedly condone brutal assaults, disguised as compassion, on the weakest and most vulnerable persons in our society."

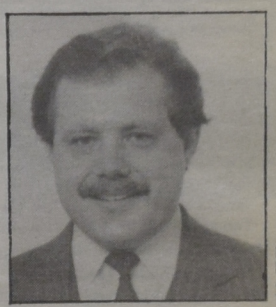
Recently, Eckstein appeared before the committee with a 60-page list of recommendations. She comments that the Senate report makes "dangerous subjective suggestions that some human beings are less valuable than others. Parliament must refrain from creating a new offense of 'mercy killing' and shore up the existing homicide laws that grant all persons, regardless of abilities or disabilities, equal protection."

CHN is a Christian non-profit organization that networks with other pro-life groups and provides information on euthanasia and related issues. Last year, CHN was actively involved in both the Rodriguez and Latimer cases.

Evangelical Fellowship of Canada executive director Brian Stiller agreed with recommendations that suicide and euthanasia remain criminal offenses.

EFC also agreed with the committee's affirmation of the importance of palliative care. But Stiller writes, "We are disturbed by its recommendations that less severe penalties be given for killings motivated by compassion.... By recommending less severe penalties for mercy killing, particularly in the case of involuntary euthanasia when the consent of the victim is not obtained, [it] suggests that some are less deserving of protection from murder than others."

Stiller says that EFC supports current laws on euthanasia and suicide. The Social Action Committee of the EFC recently made a submission to the Senate committee in which it said, "We believe that what is required is a strong and unqualified commitment to the sanctity of life by the major institutions of our society... Persons facing death do not need help in dying, they need support to live in the face of suffering. They need comfort, care and protection."



C.C. FILES

Brian Stiller

Study to examine ethnic tobacco use

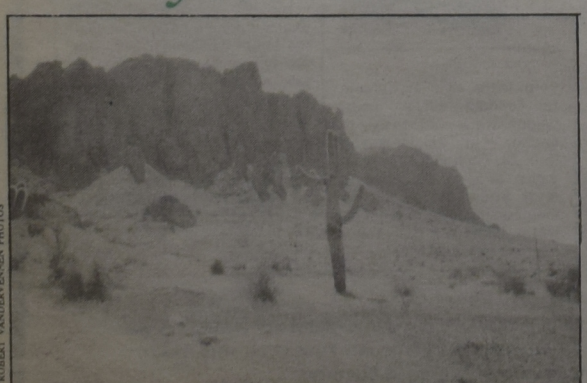
TORONTO (HWC) — On June 8, federal health minister Diane Marleau announced funding for a study which will examine the tobacco-related knowledge, attitudes and behaviors of various ethnic groups in Canada.

Marleau said that this research will be invaluable in planning tobacco prevention and cessation programs targeted at ethnic communities.

The study wants to understand the cultural, social values and practices associated with tobacco use; changes in tobacco use associated with immigration; perceptions of the health risks of tobacco use and perception of the benefits or difficulties of smoking cessation.

Health Canada's National Health Research and Development Program is funding this study through the department's Tobacco Demand Reduction Strategy in the amount of $259,708. The NHRDP funds leading edge research in public health and health services. The study will be administered by the Addiction Research Foundation.

Prickly scenes in the Arizona desert



ROBERT VANDERVENNEN PHOTOS

Recently, our correspondent Bob Vandervennen and his wife, Mary, vacationed in Arizona. These photos reflect the rugged beauty of the desert. Above is a Saguaro cactus that has a lifespan of 150 to 200 years.

A variety of cacti flourish together in the Arizona desert.